The Archaeology of Roman Macedonia

Urban and rural environments

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Front cover: Great Baths in Dion (photo: author). The theatre of Philippoi (photo: F. Koutroumbis, Diazoma Association). Residential units in Dion (source: E. Papagianni, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki). The propylon in Maroneia (photo: author).

To Michelle

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Digital maps created with QGIS 2.3 (http://aegis.athenarc.gr/). In Greece the overall copyright of all the antiquities depicted in photos belongs to Hellenic Ministry of Culture and the local Ephorates (N.3028/2002). The digital drawings present the most essential characteristics of architecture.

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Foreword

The main target of this book is to provide a synthetic look at the built environment of Roman Macedonia. The immense amount of work done by archaeologists on different sites across North Greece and in the state of North Macedonia has never been synthetically discussed at any length and consequently scholars and students find it difficult to comprehend the development of human habitus over the long period we call Roman or Imperial. This book has been written primarily with the needs of this audience in mind and for those who wish to go further into the subject.

Part I of the book starts with the historical context of Roman Macedonia and outlines the available evidence on resources, urbanization and roads. The different chapters in Part II give a grounding in the evidence available for the study of Roman Macedonia, its problems and in many cases how different scholars have dealt with them. They are intended to provide the basic set of tools to help the reader to access each subject independently. By contrast in Part III I set out my own reading of the archaeological evidence hoping that this part of the book will provide a summary and a synthesis.

The quantity of archaeological literature relevant to the subject makes it almost impossible to escape the charge of failing to take into account all of it. Inevitably some aspects and areas fare better than others but hopefully nothing of crucial importance has been missed. I have not dealt with in-depth descriptions of architectural features, an effort that could be hindered by the large amount of data and the restricted space of the book. Rather I present an overview of the different features of the built environment from the time of the conquest (168 BC) to the early 4th century AD by summarizing the most accepted theories regarding their development and identification.

A great deal of the information used for the compilation of the chapters comes from the various reports of the Archaeologikon Deltion which covers the work of the Greek Archaeological Service in Macedonia and Thrace since the early 1920s but also from papers presented and published in the Archaeologikon Ergo stin Makedonia kai Thraki (*AeMTh*), an annual conference that presents the archaeological work in North Greece. Many of these articles contain summaries in English that make their content somewhat accessible to an international audience. As more sites are well excavated, more archaeological data are available to experts and in recent years, the number of research articles, doctoral dissertations and especially monographs concerning elements of the architectural environment of Macedonia has also increased. Monographs such as the one of the late A. Oulkeroglou on baths, or G. Falezza's and K. Chatzinikolaou on sanctuaries and synthetic articles such as the one of V. Di Napoli's on theatres and

spectacle buildings, M. Zarmakoupi's on urban environment, F. Karagianni's on houses or K. Ketani's on villas to single out some of the many that have been written were important tools for writing this book. Special mention should be given to the many postgraduate theses of students of the Aristotle University which for some sites such as Dion proved to be valuable source of information. All these have contributed to an incredible accumulation of work which I will try to assess in this book. Wherever this was possible I tried not to burden the reader with detailed references but rather to refer to synthetic works or articles in which one who is interested in more detailed analysis – description can locate all the relevant literature. A note on dates: I have used the traditional dating system of BC and AD. For longer periods I have used the terms Late Hellenistic – Early Imperial period (for the period between the mid-2nd century BC – end of the 1st century AD) and Middle Roman Period (end of 1st century AD – beginning of 4th century AD) as used by J. Bintliff in *The Complete Archaeology of Greece: From Hunter–Gatherers to the 20th century AD.*

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I owe much to my wife Michelle Deedman for her support epxressed in so many forms. I would like particularly to thank Prof. Th. Stefanidou-Tiveriou for advice and support which allowed me the freedom to pursue new lines of thought. I owe a particular debt of gratitude to my friend and colleague D. Grigoropoulos (DAI) who has read and provided valuable comments and ecouragment and to D. Tsiafakis (Director of Research in Athena RC) for detailed comments and continuous trust to my research. I have gained much from discussion with Y. Mourthos, V. di Napoli, D. Rogers, K. Raptis, M. Zaramkoupi, K. Panagopoulou, E. Rinaldi, B. Burrell, Ch. Tsochos, C. Dickenson, J. Fouquet, N. Nerantzis (for his knowledge on ancient metal extraction), Prof. P. Karanstasi and the Directors (V. Katsouros and N. Tsirliganis) and staff of Athena Research Centre at Xanthi who generously supported my research in kind. I am grateful to the following for illustrations: E. Papagianni, D. Damaskos, G. Pavlovski, Diazoma Association and the Cast Museum of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. Finally, my thanks go to the editors of Oxbow publications, Julie Gardiner and Jessica Hawxwell and their associates who believed in the project.

This book owes much to the Roman Seminar initiative and to the persons that comprised it: V. di Napoli, D. Grigoropoulos, F. Camia, D. Rogers and S. Vlizos. The questions and the discussion raised during the ten years of lectures prompted my line of enquiry and fundamentally shaped my ideas.

Introduction

D. Grigoropoulos

Writing a book on a region or province of the Roman Empire is not an easy task. The ever-growing number of studies, publications, and archaeological discoveries is such that even keeping pace with (let alone providing an authoritative synthesis of) relevant developments for a single province is a feat in itself. While several scholars have attempted such broad syntheses, few have succeeded in delivering works that have stood the test of time. My personal favourites are John J. Wilkes' *Dalmatia* (1969), R.J.A. Wilson's *Sicily under the Roman Empire* (1990), Susan E. Alcock's *Graecia Capta* (1993) and John Mattingly's *Tripolitania* (1995). Although reflecting different styles, schools of thought and generations of scholars, they have a common denominator: while acknowledging the complexities of their subject matter, they did not shun from posing questions about until then little-known provincial societies, showing how archaeological evidence, from building remains and inscriptions to small finds, can contribute to broader historical syntheses of the Roman Empire. For this, it is not only necessary to have a profound command of evidence of all kinds but also the ability to balance between the general and the specific, and to move between different scales of analysis, linking local with regional, provincial, and empire-wide developments.

Set against such formidable tradition of scholarship, this book sets out to explore the Roman province of Macedonia. The difficulties and significance of this undertaking cannot be overstated. Although the earliest area of the Hellenistic world conquered by Rome and a core region of the eastern part of the empire, the archaeology and history of Roman Macedonia has never been the subject of an integrated study. For a region so exceptionally rich in Roman sites and monuments and so intensively investigated by archaeology, this is bizarre yet not without explanation. Serious engagement with the material record of the Roman province, now split between the territory of three modern nation states, although constant, has been hampered by linguistic divides, different academic traditions and lack of collaboration. Yet more pervasive, I would contend, has been the impact of essentialist discourses – fuelled by spurious nationalist politics and contested myths of origin. Accordingly, contrary to the presumed 'golden era' of the Macedonian kings or the Byzantine period, the region's conquest by Rome and its incorporation into the Roman Empire had little to offer in the context of national narratives and has been considered of little significance. The pervasiveness of these perceptions in popular imagination is such that

frequently even monuments built by Roman emperors, such as the palatial complex of Galerius in Thessaloniki, are erroneously regarded as 'Byzantine'.

While the power of these images is not easy to deconstruct, Vassilis Evangelidis' work demonstrates how such modern divides can be bridged, how gaps in existing knowledge can be filled and how inherited misconceptions about the Roman past can be redressed. Based on the collection and appraisal of a vast body of material, much of which is little known outside strictly national academic traditions, his present book provides the first comprehensive work on the archaeology of Roman Macedonia. It is a skilful exposition of how archaeology, supplemented by historical, textual and epigraphic evidence, can contribute to a more nuanced understanding of the material conditions and life in the province. The region's varied and unique geography, its history during the conquest, post-conquest and Imperial period, its changing social and demographic make-up, inherited landscape, and economic resources, are all important parameters in tracing how, why and with what pace the built environment evolved and took shape the way it did. Settlement hierarchies, site types and buildings, their emergence and transformations are examined in detail and contextualized over the entire period from the beginnings of the Roman province to Late Antiquity. In his narrative, the built environment is thus taken to represent a significant marker of continuity and change with its own dynamics that were shaped by different forces and influences from both within and outside the province.

In this way, Roman Macedonia emerges as a complex, multifocal provincial society with its own internal hierarchies and settlement patterns, where the built environment in cities of different status and at sites of varying function and rank around them and in the countryside invites different and, perhaps even, contrasting readings. Comparisons of Macedonia with other provincial settings in terms of the development and shape of architectural space provide a backdrop for assessing how local and provincial patterns relate to empire-wide developments and why, if at all, Macedonia followed its own unique trajectory. Yet, this book is hardly the final word on the subject. Far from this, the archaeology of Roman Macedonia has still a lot to offer and poses many more questions for future scholars to explore; this book gives to those interested the chance to unlock them.

Dimitris Grigoropoulos
Athens, December 2021

Part I

Roman Macedonia: history, people, cities and resources

Chapter 1

The historical framework: Roman Macedonia. From the revolt of Andriscus to the reign of Galerius

It has become customary to start any account of the history of Roman Macedonia with the defeat of the last Antigonid king Perseus at the battle of Pydna (168 BC). In an ironic twist, though, the story of Roman Macedonia begins twice at the same place: Pydna. In the year 148 BC the adventurer (αεροπετής according to Polyb. 36.9–10 the one who fell from the sky winning victory after victory) Andriscus or pseudo-Philip and his followers after a fervent two-year revolt (Nigdelis 2007, 51–52, n. 2; Vanderspoel 2010, 252) were crushed by the praetor Quintus Caecilius Metellus at the same site where 20 years before the Roman legions of Aemilus Paulus shocked the Hellenistic world by the blasting defeat of the mighty Macedonian phalanx (Daubner 2018; 2019, 142–143). At Pydna, Aemilius Paulus proved most emphatically that the previous encounter between Romans and Macedonians at *Kynos Kephalai* (197 BC) was not just a coincidence of luck but a result of the tactical superiority and high morale of the Roman milites. During these 20 years Macedonia had been transformed to a four-region protectorate where specific measures (among them the prohibition of intermarriage) ensured the control of Rome. The Romans organized the area by creating new administrative units based on geographical regions, each focused on a pre-Roman urban centre (Hatzopoulos 1996, 231–260; Nigdelis 2007, 51): Amphipolis, Thessaloniki, Pella and the area of Pelagonia. An important aspect of the process was the control over the distribution of resources especially mineral wealth, through which Rome bolstered its position (Nigdelis 2007, 52). The previous unified economy was replaced by regional economies with little linkage between them. At this initial stage the local councils did most of the governmental work themselves. We know surprisingly little about this period and the tensions it created in Macedonian society. Few years after Pydna, the massacre for instance at the "Pan Macedonian" council (despite the division, an indication of the existence of a collective body of officials) at *Phakos* (the swamp citadel of Pella) by a certain Damassipos highlights these tensions and the intensity of the period (Nigdelis 2007, 52–53). Such tensions climaxed with the revolt of Andriscus and, later, other claimants (another Philip at

143 BC and a certain Euphantus at 93 BC) of the Antigonid throne with the support of Thracian allies (Diod. Sic. 32.15).

Based solely on the laconic historical sources, it is difficult to understand the real motives of these usurpations. The history of Andriscus in particular (Diod. Sic. 32, 15, 5–7; Polyb. 36, 10, 1–7) is very vague about how much was true or whether just circulated to justify the problems that Roman power had produced (Eckstein 2010, 246–248). Clearly the most significant of them was the reluctance of Rome to become directly involved in the administration of the recently conquered lands. Undeniably, there was a close connection between administrative failure and rebellion, with dissatisfaction amongst lower and higher classes playing a significant role in these events. Whatever the motives behind the rebellions, they added a further parameter to the political confusion of the later 2nd century BC. It was only after Andriscus (Nigdelis 2007, 53; Vanderspoel 2010, 252), that a more direct rule over North Greece was imposed since the region proved too troublesome to be left nominally independent. Even so, the process brought almost two centuries of prolonged instability for the broader region of south Balkans.

The last two centuries BC saw a fervent military activity in the area which reached its peak during the clash with the barbaric tribes of the north (Nigdelis 2007, 54–55; Vanderspoel 2010, 261–264). Politically, the history of Late Hellenistic Macedonia is one of continuous rivalry and warfare with the northern Thracian and Celtic tribes. By the middle of the 1st century BC different tribal coalitions, many of them the product of reaction against the pressure from the expansionist policies of the Antigonid kingdom, had successfully established their authority over large territories in the border zones between Macedonia and Thrace (the interior of the Balkans). The brute force that they were often treated by Roman magistrates like the praetor Marcus Minicius Rufus (110 BC) or later by M.I. Brutus (43-42 BC), when he was trying to establish his base of power in the area, provide an alluring story of the interaction between the Roman administration and local groups during the years that the Roman state was continuously expanding or trying to secure its imperial authority over lands and people. The history of Roman administration of Macedonia reflects many of the inadequacies of Roman imperialism confronting quarrelsome tribal units especially outside the core of the old Macedonian kingdom. The list of Roman praetors like Marcus Terentius Lucullus (73 BC) or Lucius Calpurnius Piso (55 BC), who repeatedly dealt with the Thracian problem is long. Engaged in wars around the northern fringes of the new province, the Roman governors (Sarikakis 1971), often motivated by the search for glory and wealth for themselves, sought mostly military dominance over tribal units rather than a stable system of administration or direct rule. The case of Lucius Calpurnius Piso Caesoninus exemplifies this loss of morality and the lack of any systematic plan of administration which raised fierce critique among the contemporaries. The words of Cicero (*Against Piso* 38): “for the governors of Macedonia the borders were always the same as those marked by the swords and spears” illustrate the role that these rapacious governors played in carving Roman policy in the area (Vanderspoel 2010,

259). Having seized the core of the Macedonian kingdom, the aggressive policies of Roman governors resulted in a really extended province which reached to the banks of the Danube (Allamani 2003; Vanderspoel 2010, 258–259). The years 167 BC to 31 BC saw annexation of almost all areas north of the Axios River and east of Nestos, regions with mixed Thraco Graecian populations. Rome increasingly interfered in the political landscape of the coastal strip of the Aegean Thrace creating there a buffer zone during the late Republican period (Loukopoulou 1987). By the end of the period much of Thessaly and Epirus comprised part of the province, as did parts of Thrace and Dardania (Nigdelis 2007, 57).

Roman intervention brought with it warfare, land redistribution and colonization. Over the Late Hellenistic period Romans and *Italiotes* – Latin speakers from Italy (Rizakis 2002) – individually or organized in communities started to acquire land and commercial rights throughout the area. The period of transition from Late Hellenistic to Imperial in Macedonia, covering the 150 years between the end of the old kingdom and the final phase of the Civil Wars with the decisive battle of Philippoi (42 BC) has long attracted the most scholarly interest (Daubner 2018), focusing on the radical change of the old institutions, the gradual disappearance of the old landholding elite and the constant barbaric raids. This is the time that is widely seen as "transitional" to the pacified province of the Imperial period. Undeniably the constant friction with the northern tribes but most importantly the clash of large professional armies during the Roman Civil Wars caused demographic, economic, and infrastructural damage particularly to the heart of the kingdom. Many cities had suffered during the conflicts with the Thracian invaders and mostly from the Mithridatic wars and between the contesters of the Roman Civil Wars. Coupled with the impoverishment of the local elites the turmoil led probably to a general stagnation of urban life and the abandonment of some urban centres, especially the large royal centres Pella and Aigai with all the connotations of power they carried (see Chapter 3). This was also the period when much property and land changed hands through confiscations, donation to veterans, foundation of colonies and extra financial burdens (Vanderspoel 2010, 267–268).

1.1. The period of the Principate

With peace assured by Augustus (Nigdelis 2007, 56–58; Vanderspoel 2010, 269–274) and the establishment of the new order, the area started to recover and land proprietors started to develop the agricultural economy. By the end of the 1st century BC the retreat of the legions to the Danube frontier and the subsequent relief of the financial burden of sustaining them created new conditions for the administration and economic development of the province. Feeding the armies that were permanently or periodically stationed in the province was a major financial burden that brought serious problems in many towns and cities, since in most cases the supplies (such as grain and resources) were obtained locally to the expense of the local economies. We

know little about the absolute numbers of the men stationed in the province after the annexation but we may estimate it from the sheer scale of some operations: some dozens of thousands of men not to mention their dependents. This constant drain of money and resources added up to a major economic factor in the development of cities and towns. Extensive conscription of local militias, a trend that continued until late in the 1st century BC (Nigdelis 2007, 61) and rapacious tax collectors overburdened the already overstretched local economies (Nigdelis 2007, 64).

The establishment of the Augustan regime seems to have brought an end to most of these problems: the taxes were collected in a more organized form, the armies moved to the Danube front, conscription ended and economic stability (if not prosperity) started gradually to return. The Augustan province was much smaller and thus better administered than its Late Hellenistic predecessor which reached deep into the Balkan hinterland (Kremydi–Sicilianou 2005, 97). For a brief period, the need for better control of the Balkans led Tiberius to create a joint administration for Macedonia and Moesia, a situation that lasted at least until the mid-1st century AD, when under Claudius, Macedonia was reinstated to its former borders and status as senatorial province (Nigdelis 2007, 57). From that point on the area became in essence a *provincia inermis* (an unarmed province) which only in the time of the Severi (Gagé 1975) attained a new strategic interest in relation to the battles that Rome undertook on the eastern front.

It is difficult to sketch the history of a province that for almost 300 years (Zahrnt 2010) was left to its own devices, away from the danger of the *limes* but also from imperial interest. What can be generally said is that the Imperial period saw better administration (Nigdelis 2007, 63–65) and the people of the province were better protected against abuse of power by Roman officials, as was so often experienced during the Late Hellenistic period. The supreme power was held by a Roman official who bore the title of *proconsul*. Although he lacked the military power of his Late Hellenistic predecessors, he had extensive civic responsibilities which sometimes touched matters of local self-government. A great part of the time of the governor was spent in assizes for which the staff (a *legatus*, a *quaestor* and other officials) had to travel across the province arbitrating disputes between the communities and solving problems of finance and taxation. Of course, as in the rest of the provinces, the distinction between imperial and senatorial government was little understood by ordinary people and probably had little gravity on their contact with the Roman authority. Administration nonetheless was of supreme importance to the quality of life of the people of the province; to keep the peace, to solve quarrels between cities or individuals, even to supervise large projects of infrastructure and most importantly to collect taxes (or to sum up taxes collected by the local councils). Our knowledge about the fiscal system (Nigdelis 2007, 64–65) and its real impact on the life and prosperity of the province is limited. After all, it seems that there was a great diversity from province to province. The usual property tax (*tributum soli*) and per capita tax were not levied in the colonies and other privileged communities but to what extent the

stipendium, the fixed amount collected in cash, had a negative impact to the economies of the cities (*civitates stipendiariae*) cannot be easily assessed (Kremydi-Sicilianou 2005, 95–101). A standard feature of the provincial life were the compulsory public services which could have taken various forms. Provision of transport, accommodation of officials and maintenance of the roads may have been burdens for the local economy but, still, this was a system of provincial administration that allowed a great degree of independence among the cities of the area.

During the Imperial period, the cities (Nigdelis 2007, 65–68) remained the basic administrative unit responsible for their agricultural territory, the collection of taxes, the regulation of political and economic life but also the maintenance of order. Within the competitive framework of the Roman state (and especially during the Early Imperial period) the status and the privileges of every city were constantly negotiated through intricate and complicated relationships that involved local notables and Roman authorities or even the emperor himself. We know that some cities such as Maroneia (in coastal Thrace) negotiated favourable relationships with Rome – the status of *civitas immunis ad libera* – as early as the Third Macedonian war (Loukopoulou 1987, 102–104; Loukopoulou *et al.* 2005, E168, 339), while others, such as Stobi, seem to have attained a special status (*municipium*) because of their large resident population of Roman citizens.

In absence of official bureaucracy, it was the cities and their local councils that did most of the governmental and administrative work such as the maintenance and construction of infrastructure, the negotiation with the imperial authorities and the collection of taxes. The weight of these decisions fell primarily on the shoulders of the local elites, for whom the participation in civic activity and local councils proved attractive as the primary means of social advancement. An important aspect of this participation was of course the act of euergetism (Zuiderhoek 2009), the provision of public buildings, monuments and infrastructure. Control over these public benefactions had been an important way by which local elites bolstered their position and secured important political rewards, control of the local councils, a platform for social and political advancement and eventually promotion to the highest ranks of the Roman society. The career of one of the chief priests of the imperial cult Q. Popilius Python from Beroia as sketched by inscriptions (Burrell 2004, 191; Nigdelis 2007, 76) is illustrative of the status and connections of many local notables, and of the role that these local elites could play in provincial life. In the years after Pydna and until the establishment of the Augustan regime a new elite gradually formed from the surviving members of old houses like the family of Harpaloi in Beroia (Kuzmin 2013), from people that had been without rights under the former Macedonian kings like Thracians and newcomers from Italy, all now with a very pro-Roman profile. For all these elite groups Roman citizenship and social status through participation in religious and political institutions were as important as was participation in the royal court or citizenship in the Greek city states. In the hierarchically structured society of Macedonia people from lower strata were always excluded from basic civic

functions and offices. This was a trend that continued in the Imperial period with new distinctions (honestiores/elites – humiliores/lower classes), new elite boards (such as the *gerousia* in Thessaloniki) and offices such as that of *politarches* (Nigdelis 2007, 67–68), powerful local aristocrats who held the role of advising the local councils and controlling the congregation of citizen body whenever this was needed.

In Upper Macedonia (see Fig. 1) where the level of urbanization was smaller, local assemblies of villages and small towns representing "*ethne*" (tribal groups) assumed the role that the boule had in the urban centres of Lower Macedonia (Sverkos 2000). The description of "demos" and "ethnos" that is often encountered in inscriptions probably reflects a differentiation between populations based in poleis and those that lived in less urbanized areas such as Upper Macedonia. Roman administration retained this form of organization respecting the local idiosyncracies.

New collective political bodies like the *Koinon of the Macedonians* which was based in Beroia were added in the political landscape of Imperial period Macedonia (Kanatsoulis 1956; Nigdelis 2007, 71). Its duties were basically ceremonial (linked with the promotion and conduct of imperial cult on a provincial level) and diplomatic as an intermediate body between the cities and central authorities. It may not have attained a real administrative role (although it helped in the collection of taxes) but the impact of the *Koinon* on the social and cultural life of the province should not be underestimated. Providing the framework for elite competition and career development bolstered a series of activities and building projects that left their mark on the landscape.

1.2. Late Roman Macedonia

This is the basic political historical narrative for Macedonia between 148 BC and the end of the 3rd century AD. Undeniably the Imperial period was not one of constant prosperity, which begun with the Augustan reforms and continued until Late Antiquity. Periods of crisis and change such as the turmoil of the 3rd century AD and the Gothic raids or even before that during the period of the Antonine plague must have caused shifts in economy and settlement, production and consumption. What is, nevertheless, certain and archaeologically visible is that this relatively long period of peace and stability left its imprint on the landscape especially after the end of the 1st century AD when investment in infrastructure and monumental architecture maximized. Interestingly this continued well into the 4th and 5th centuries AD and archaeological research has produced conclusive evidence of a flourishing economy with widespread rural prosperity. Late Roman prosperity has been linked to the importance of the area within the Late Roman imperial structure. A key element was the appointment of Thessaloniki as an imperial capital and later the relocation of the centre to Constantinople (Bintliff 2012, 358). Large numbers of administrators and other court members were now resident in Macedonia as were a large number of troops. The importance of imperial service meant that locals now competed for a

place within the bureaucratic structure, a situation that was later accentuated by the proximity to Constantinople. The establishment of the imperial court of Galerius in Thessaloniki during the early 4th century AD gave to the locals much greater access to power and influence than what they held in the Early and Middle Roman period when the adminsitrative centre was in Rome.

The commonly accepted theory is that the end of the Imperial period phase came after the reign of Galerius and during the course of the Late Roman period when rural settlements contracted, and cities were gradually abandoned. Admittedly though these processes were not clear-cut events and, in many areas, life continued with the same vitality as in the previous period at least till the 6th century AD (Dunn 2004). Whether or not the period between the 4th and 6th centuries AD should be seen in terms of decline of the built environment is questionable because in Macedonia (at least in the major centres) the crisis does not seem to have had a great effect on the built environment. It is only after the late 6th century AD that this started to change. By this time, it was clear that the situation of the Roman and Late Roman period no longer pertained.

1.3. Human geography: the different people of Roman Macedonia

A very interesting aspect of the history of Macedonia during the Roman period is human geography which reveals a remarkable and fascinating multiplicity. Although population data for ancient societies are quite often based on extrapolations, the generally accepted population growth that is attested for Hellenistic Macedonia (Billows 1995, 146–82; Bintliff 2012, 317) has been seen as an indicator of a vibrant economy in which the relatively large population of 500,000 (Millet 2010, 477) did not put pressure on resources, especially food production. On the contrary, the high level of fertility and the population increase (through slaves and war prisoners) provided more productive hands to the largely agricultural economy. Most of this population seems to have resided in a dense network of small farms and villages, interspersed with large estate centres that housed the elite landed aristocracy. The increasing efficiency in administrative techniques, and the organizational and military means to apply it, was the engine that allowed the Macedonian kings to far exceed any limits on subsistence.

The composition of this population provides the framework against which we can view the social, cultural and economic environment of the Imperial period. While the Greek speaking Macedonians had the largest share of the total population in the core of the kingdom, in other areas the population included Thracians, Paeonians, Illyrians and other pre-Greek strata (Hatzopoulos 2011a, 43). Throughout history, this multi-ethnic character had affected social and political organization, religion, culture and probably economy and settlement patterns. Although, in contrast to the ethnic homogeneity of southern Greece, Macedonia was always a multi-ethnic region, this diversity was not necessarily reflected in every city and town of the old

kingdom. The different parts of the population were concentrated in specific zones with the mixing occurring mostly in the fringe zones like many of the first coastal Greek colonies that (in many cases) were formed during the 7th and 6th centuries BC as frontier societies composed of multiple founding populations. There, mixed population was a standard feature of demography, reflecting probably larger trends of economy and culture. The ethnic and racial landscape became even more complex during the Late Classical and Hellenistic periods. Continental expansion added lands that had been home to Thracians and peoples of mixed indigenous and Celtic origin, and successive waves of immigration from Macedonia fueled the rapid growth of an increasingly diverse population (Millet 2010, 503).

If changing patterns of demography like the appearance of new elements and their territorial distribution along with social mobility and change of status are widely acknowledged as important elements of transformation then the Imperial period was a period of rapid and irreversible social change (Rizakis and Touratsoglou 2016, 120). It is only by then that Macedonia's diverse racial and ethnic makeup had increasingly became apparent in all urban centres. The best evidence of evolution in the human geography of Macedonia is the demographic change that took place over the two and a half centuries after the conquest. By the late 2nd century BC Italians, known to the sources as *negotiatores*, seem to have settled in several cities like Apollonia or Kalindoia, many of them trading nodes along Via Egnatia. The fact that some of them like a certain M. Lucilius Marcus (Nigdelis 2007, 59) who repaired or donated a gymnasium in the city of Apollonia, had even adopted a Greek name, Demetrius, can be seen as an indicator of a process of blending that probably took place between the newcomers and the old population.

Undeniably the economic possibilities opened by the destruction of the old kingdom and the profits gained by the continuous warfare attracted entrepreneurs from different places in Italy (onomastics has shown links with Campania and Lucania) but also from Italians already settled in the East (Rizakis 2002). How many these negotiatores were in actual numbers remains unknown, but they were surely enough to be organized into communities (*conventum civium Romanorum*) which are attested in many cities: Thessaloniki, Beroia, Edessa, Styberra and Eidomene. Later in the 1st century BC a significant number of Roman and Italian colonists and immigrants was added, permanently settled in several colonies (Katsari and Mitchell 2008). These were retired veterans but also farmers and freedmen that came to the East (voluntarily or involuntarily) to seek land and new opportunities.

Claims to Italian–Roman ancestry were strongly tied to socioeconomic status during the Imperial period, and were associated with civil career opportunities, wealth residential patterns or even marital choices. For many Roman-origin individuals or groups especially in the colonies, however, ethnic identity manifested itself in symbolic attachment to language, architecture and probably habits. Although it is not always easy to understand the processes of cultural separation or assimilation, eventually the distinction between Roman and locals became blurred. But at the

beginning it is clear that important differences between colonists and locals (Nigdelis 2007, 66) continued long after the initial settlement.

In order, nevertheless, to understand a provincial regime such as that of Macedonia, we should probably not imagine a strict horizontal division of power and wealth. Locals like the family of Harpaloi in Beroia remained very wealthy and able to hold resources and land over many newcomers. Even in areas where violent expropriation occurred, such as the core of the kingdom, it is unlikely that all landowners lost their land. New population groups were added during the Imperial period by incomers (artisans and businessmen) from Asia Minor and the Roman East, who were organized in communities of Asians (Nigdelis 2006, 135–146). These were attested in different cities, from Thessaloniki to the small town of Lete (Nigdelis 2007, 62). To them we should probably also add Jews who since the Late Hellenistic period had already been established in large cities like Thessaloniki, Beroia and Philippoi (Nigdelis 1994). These new immigrants from Asia and the Roman East must have added a large measure of cultural diversity to the local population in the 1st century AD, just as waves of immigrants from Italy did a century ago. Most importantly, the boundaries between racial and ethnic groups were becoming blurred by high rates of intermarriage and the growing number of persons with mixed ancestry.

For the core of the population, the Macedonians themselves, the years after Pydna were probably marked by a serious demographic blow in all levels of society. This affected not only local elites (Livy 45.32.41), who, as shown by F. Daubner (2019), followed their king to Italy or fled to other places of the Hellenistic East but also the common people, the basic constituent of the *phalanx*, many of whom were lost in the battle itself and the years of turmoil that followed. Because the military endeavors of the local militias (organized either in the traditional phalanx form or in a Roman fashion) did not finish with the Battle of Pydna but continued in the fights against the northern barbarians and during the Roman Civil Wars. In one case we know that Gaius Cassius Longinus, praetor of Macedonia, trained two legions of locals in a Roman fashion to fight against the always threatening Thracian tribe of Bessi (Nigdelis 2007, 56).

There is consensus that the first century of Roman conquest was a demographic disaster for Macedonians with a significant decline for the native population of Macedonia (or diverse parts of). Following the demographic drop, existing social, environmental and political problems may have been exacerbated bringing about a variety of localized responses, including financial weakness, the breakdown of social hierarchy, and ultimately the decline of civic activity and investment in urban infrastructure across the core of the old kingdom from 168 to 27 BC. As the situation began to normalize after the end of the 1st century BC, a wide variety of reactions – as evidenced by the epigraphic and archaeological evidence – testify to the particular social conditions of the period and the increased level of cultural mixing. Interestingly, these levels of cultural and ethnic mixing were paralleled by an increased awareness of ancestry which reshaped ethnic boundaries during the 2nd century AD. Onomastics

in combination with material culture (*e.g.* burial rites) show that in cases a strong sense of local identity was preserved until Late Antiquity. One of the most interesting aspects of this process is the growing cult of Alexander the Great (late 2nd – early 3rd century AD) which seems to have been widespread in Upper Macedonia (see Fig. 15), as evidenced by a series of stelae in which Alexander often in combination with the reptilian daemons, the Dracon and the Dracaena appears (Rizakis and Touratsoglou 1999, 955–959). Although many aspects of mnemonic process in Roman Macedonia still remain unknown, it is obvious that, as in southern Greece, the nostalgic view, the projection and often the reconstruction of the past, were characteristic phenomena of the period.

1.4. Epilogue to the historical overview

The previous pages attempted to give a brief history of Roman Macedonia between the battle of Pydna and the early 4th century AD. From the late 19th century, the archaeological traces of this period began to be recognized and the information from the written sources (especially the rich epigraphical material) started to receive important confirmation through the study of archaeological remains. As excavation techniques and mapping developed sufficiently during the 20th century, archaeology started to suggest details additional to those found in the written sources and the inscriptions providing a basis for new insights into the cultural history of the era. Before proceeding, however, to the examination of the features of the built environment, it is important to examine the geography, the resources and the urban and road network of this large area. The physical environment and its appropriation by the people of the area played a major role in the cultural histories and social developments that took place in Macedonia over the Imperial period.

Chapter 2

Land and resources: ownership and exploitation

2.1 The geographical setting of Provincia Macedonia

The geographical setting of the Roman province of Macedonia comprises a substantial part of the south Balkans. In modern terms, Roman Macedonia covers much of North Greece, a great part of North Macedonia and a part of South-West Bulgaria. During the Late Hellenistic period the province extended considerably, into the Danubian lands (the heart of Thracian and Gallic tribes) towards the north and Thessaly to the south. Despite the expansions or contractions of the Late Hellenistic period, the heart of the province was always the lands covered by the old Argeadic/Temenid and later Antigonid kingdom. This falls into four basic natural–physical divisions from west to east (Fig. 1):

- The area of Upper Macedonia between the bulk of the Pindos mountain range to the west and Mt. Bermion to the east.
- The area of Lower Macedonia (including the south lands of Pieria), largely the region of Bottia an extensive alluvial plain between Mt. Bermion to the west and River Axios to the east, characterized by fertile land but also extensive wetlands.
- The large area of Amphaxitis (the word literally meaning the area around the banks of Axios) between the River Axios to the west and Mt. Bertiskos to the east, an extensive area that included diverse landscapes ranging from the coastal areas of the peninsulas of Chalkidike to the south to the uplands of the modern borders between Greece and North Macedonia (the areas of Paeonia and Pelagonia).
- Finally, the large area of Parastrymonia between Mt. Bertiskos to the west and the River Nestos to the east.

This transitional landscape – between the continental character of the Balkans and the Meditetterenean nature of the Aegean – is characterized by a considerable diversity in relief and soil conditions offering a variety of environmental challenges but also opportunities. The area features great geographical and topographical diversity with a variety of terrains, elevations and weather patterns ranging from alpine forests to semi-arid coastal landscapes. Mountain ranges in the northern highlands feature peaks (like the famous Kajmakčalan-Voras) as high as 2500 m creating a barrier between

Figure 1. Districts and areas of Macedonia (digital map author).

the north (today North Macedonia) and south areas (Greece). On the other hand, the central and southern coastal lowlands like the three peninsulas of Chalkidike show a range of temperate to Mediterranean climates. Several areas like Orestis (the modern area of Kastoria) or Lyncestis (the modern area of Florina) have mountainous characteristics, others such as Bottia (modern Emathia) or Bisaltia (the area of Serres) are dominated by flat and fertile plains. Further inland in Parorbelia or Pelagonia (today in North Macedonia) extensive areas of well-wooded upland are strewn with lakes and streams. Turning to the more eastern areas of the province, the area of Philippoi, and the plain of modern Drama, offered great potential to systematic farming due to the high quality of soils.

The main river systems (large in comparison to the torrential rivers of South Greece) drain from north to south, forming part of the great Danubian system and laying down enormous masses of alluvial material (Fig. 2). The importance of rivers and their adjacent fluvial landscapes as socio-cultural dividing lines and economic vectors–zones is without doubt immense in Macedonian history. The potential for communication through river valleys had a substantial effect on shaping regional economies even though traces of river trade have been pinned down only in northern Axios. The presence of large water bodies like the rivers Axios, Strymon or Loudias

along with their tributaries and some of the larger lakes in the Greek peninsula (Prespa, Vegoritis, Koroneia, Volvi and Doirani) secured the agricultural economy of the area, fed by the ample provision of fresh water. The wetter and milder conditions suggested by climate reconstructions for between *c.* 100 BC and AD 200 (McCormick *et al.* 2012) would have further enhanced the agricultural potential of the area.

However, the diverse physical environment of Macedonia is much more than just a "backdrop" against which local cultures developed. From prehistoric times the resources of the region and the strategic position along major land routes connecting north–south and east–west ensured that there was a great deal of movement and interaction within and between the different microregions, setting in motion processes which shaped the unique material culture of the area, its architecture and settlement patterns.

2.2. Land and agriculture

As in other preindustrial societies the social organization of the people of Macedonia was closely related to land possession and agriculture. The bulk of the population lived in the countryside in sites of varying sizes and densities with the land being the basis upon which cities depended for their own prosperity. The region, where the great alluvial plains lay, was and still is extremely fertile. The large rivers Haliakmon, Loudias, Axios, Strymon and Nestos fed the fertile plains of Central and eastern Macedonia (see Fig. 2). The coastal plain of Thessaloniki, the plain of Beroia (the ancient area of Bottia), the landlocked plains of Drama and Serres to the east as well as the upland basins of western (Upper) Macedonia provided opportunities for agricultural exploitation on a much larger scale than south Greece. This was recognized early by ancient authors like Herodotus (8.118) who described the land around Naoussa as the *gardens of Midas*, an area where beautiful voluptuous "fifty petal" roses grew.

As we have seen archaeology and survey work suggest widespread evidence for growth of the rural population and increase in cultivated land in Macedonia for the Late Classical and Hellenistic period (Bintliff 2012, 317). Small and medium estates, agricultural facilities, roads and archaeobotanical finds indicate the existence of a mixed agricultural economy with hints of agricultural intensification in the lowland areas and an emphasis on pastoralism in the upland areas. Archaeobotanical evidence from different archaeological contexts like for instance from the small Hellenistic Mygdonian city of Ossa (Mangafa 1992) or the large Hellenistic farm at Tria Platania in Pieria (Margariti 2015) indicate the existence of a great variety of cultivated crops such as cereals (emmer, einkorn, barley and millet), legumes (lentils), fruit (figs and grapes), olives (Margariti and Jones 2008) and grape seeds.

Specific rural sites like the above-mentioned complex at Tria Platania which grew to a larger than average size (2400 m^2) show clear archaeological signs of a social hierarchy within a highly organized and managed landscape (Margariti 2015, 337). It has been one of the revelations of recent decades to learn the variety and the density

Figure 2. Physical geography. Mountains, lakes and rivers (digital map author).

of rural settlements over very large parts of the landscape. This has become particularly clear in areas susceptible to mapping and excavations such as the areas along the modern Egnatia motorway and also in other areas like Pieria where a cluster of large farms have been found in the vicinity of Platamonas (sites Krania, Tria Platania, Kompoloi and Douvari). The doubtless complex rural economic landscapes escape clear elucidation in archaeological terms but it may be that these areas eschewed the decline that came to characterize other areas of the Aegean world during the Hellenistic times (Bintliff 2012, 317). Even so, as observed in other parts of the Meditetterenean world in the course of the Late Hellenistic period strong pressures were probably exerted on rural space and land exploitation (Rizakis 2013). In Italy during the turbulent period of the Late Republic rural space gradually found its way into the hands of powerful men or women (Hatzopoulos 2011b, 47), who often with the use of political manipulation or sheer violence managed to accumulate great land estates (*latifundia*). The expansion of the Roman state outside Italy seems to have caused similar effects: the change of land ownership, the collapse of the small Greek farm and the creation of great land estates (controlled by Romans or Romanized Greeks) are regarded as some of the greatest changes that the Roman conquest brought to the rural landscape of South Greece (Alcock 1993a, 85–87; Papaioannou 2018).

Generalization as such might serve well to illustrate the nature of changes that the impact of Rome brought across the Aegean world but we certainly cannot assume similar developments in all parts of the Greek mainland. It has been argued for instance that the situation in Thessaly and Macedonia might have been different. In these well-watered plains, large estates might have preceded the Roman conquest (Bintliff 2012, 318). In one case, that of a certain Limnaios, his estates (granted by one of the Successors, the king Lysimachos) reached 2480 plethra, around 217.25 ha (Hatzopoulos 2011b, 49) while another landowner, a certain Zopyros, managed to accumulate – through buying – estates of 100 ha (Hatzopoulos 2011b, 49). To this probably contributed the existence of a different system of political dominance: kingship which supported (and was supported by) a system of land aristocracy (Ma 2011). The "companions" (*hetairoi*) that formed the royal cavalry that followed Alexander in his campaign to the East were possibly such land aristocrats and recent excavations have revealed Hellenistic rural mansions much larger than the traditional farmsteads in South Greece. The Hellenistic mansion that was discovered at the site Dimitra in Grevena in western (Upper) Macedonia (Karamitrou–Mentesidi 2010, 33–35) covered an area of 750 m² and it is one of these large houses which based on the finds and the luxurious construction provided a comfortable standard of living even in relatively backward areas of the Macedonian kingdom. It has been suggested that in these large estates part of the local population along with war prisoners and slaves worked in a kind of dependent labour unknown to the city states of South Greece. To what extent the structure of the old kingdom may have been based on a tenurial relationship between an elite landowning class and a peasant substratum, is a question that remains unanswered (Paschidis 2006) but one which would be of fundamental importance for understanding the nature of the old institution. What can only be said at present is that divisions in wealth and power was probably always a very dominant feature of the social system in Macedonia, something that implied an already deep-rooted network of social inequalities and dependencies before the Roman annexation.

It is beyond question that the demise of the old institution would have hit many groups directly and possibly hard; not only the local elite landowners but also the small tenants, since a great percent of land properties in the pre-Roman period appear to be family-owned estates. A very characteristic example of such family-owned rural farmsteads of the Hellenistic period (4th–3rd century BC) is the one in Kypsele (*c.* 15 km NE of Vergina-Aigai), where a small house 18 × 18.50 m with seven rooms painted with red and white plaster and containing large amounts of domestic pottery, iron nails and various other metal finds, plentiful animal bones and parts of pithoi *in situ* has been found (Apostolou 1990). Many of these, as argued by P. Adam-Veleni (2009), passed into the hands of Romans/Italians or Romanized Greeks who enhanced the profile of elite owners and transferred rights from the local rural populations. Textual information from various cities and regions in Macedonia suggest indirectly the existence of these large estates. *Pragmateutai* (*actores*), *oikonomoi* (*vilices*) and *epitropoi* are terms that are encountered often in inscriptions of the 2nd or 3rd century AD

and as in other parts of the empire they seem to refer to bailiffs – overseers who run large estates on behalf of their masters. Slaves themselves or, in the best case freedmen, were either responsible (as in the case of *pragmateutai*) for the general financial management of the property (*e.g.* the collection of rents or loans by smallholders and tenants) or (in the case of *oikonomoi*) the supervision of agricultural work in the large estates (Nigdelis 2006, 227).

Rural sites have been regarded to mirror this change in use of land. Archaeological evidence based partially on survey results and mostly on rescue excavations has been thought to verify the redistribution of landed resources in favour of new groups. Rural structures, especially villa type sites that combine agricultural facilities with the luxury of residence in the countryside have been regarded as the most visual recognizable element of this change. At the centre of this rural world stood the villa rustica (Adam-Veleni 2009; Rizakis 2013), a new kind of Italian inspired rural mansion which combined the luxury and spaces of an urban house with the artisanal and storage spaces of a farm. At the recently discovered site of Palaiomanna in the highlands over Beroia (Adam-Veleni 2009, 11) the owner of a large villa of the 2nd century AD not only had the usual storage facilities (grain silos, barns and storehouses) but also a large fish pool (*pescarium*) for his daily supply of fresh trout and catfish (see Fig. 38). Installations like these indicate not only a certain degree of financial self-sufficiency but also productivity rates targeting large markets, a practice which probably led to a more intensive exploitation of the land itself and large-scale investment in cash crop agriculture and market-oriented surplus (Bowman and Wilson 2009).

Although elite investment in agriculture and rural production is almost a constant in every study of the Roman world, the view of the rural economy as inherently linked to villa economy is not without interpretative challenges and pitfalls. Unfortunately, many details of this rural world, such as the precise size of these estates, the relationship to the neighboring settlements or their role in the wider financial life remain obscure (Nigdelis 2007, 74). Whether these large estates were worked for instance by slaves throughout the year or by tenant farmers or smallholders and their families, is a matter of debate, and few excavated villa sites (see Chapter 16) seem to have provided evidence of housing for labour. Given the seasonal character of many agricultural works the latter seems the most possible.

This uncertainty of interpretations gives rise to more general issues regarding the nature of the estates themselves. For instance, the relationship(s) between tenants and landlords is not fully understood. This, as shown by W. Tietz (2020) could have been a mutually beneficial relationship where villa owners would not have to bear the financial burden of a permanent labour force, while on the other hand the smallholders could earn money or access to facilities (like kilns or wine presses) which demanded investment beyond their budget. We can only guess that many small farms were dependent on local villas either by providing labour or paying rent but given that the tenants were in most cases free we can assume a certain degree of independence. Textual evidence indicates that local elites and communities were in many cases able

to control their land and resources and retain a relative level of wealth in the region. The extent also to which small peasant proprietors disappeared is another matter of debate. Purely agricultural installations with simple accommodation have been found in high density in different regions such as the plain of Drama. Undeniably, smallholders may have had bad harvests or lost their land to the large estates, but the overall evidence shows a stable rural population. Contrary to the idea that the spread of large villas displaced small and medium landowners from the land, more positive appraisal (Bowes *et al.* 2017) of Roman agro-economy have shown that peasant farmers managed to be competitive in the market due to enhanced agricultural practices and a high level of productivity. Recent research in Italy (Laurano 2011) has shown that the appearance of large villas does not necessarily imply the displacement of small farms. Similarly, the investigation of a number of small rural sites in Macedonia (Ketanis 2015–2016) suggests that the peasant farmers who lived there might have held a certain form of financial autonomy.

Although villa type sites are considered as the backbone of the rural landscape, what is quite often overlooked is that these sites were only part of a broader landscape which contained settlements, hamlets, and different agglomerations in different densities. We can only speculate that some of the larger villas functioned as a local centre for their broader area, but we should not however invest the term "villa" with too many ideas from later history, equating the villa system with feudalism (Adam-Veleni 2009, 4, note 13). There is no precise reason to suppose that estates had necessarily to develop steadily from small to large. Estates grew, became fragmented or contracted, and they were reassembled in the context of different types of land schemes.

The archaeological identification of landowning schemes is a difficult task and therefore we should be cautious whether the distribution of villa type sites represent the real dynamics of the rural landscape. Clearly, agricultural production did not develop exclusively within the framework of a villa economy but also in other forms of settlements. Sites such as the one in Aspri Pole, Perdikka (5 km north of Ptolemaida), where a large artisanal courtyard building of the 1st century AD sheltered pottery and metallurgical activities associated with large-scale production (Kefalidou and Moschakis 1995, 38–43), highlight the difficulties of making clear distinctions between villa and other types of rural economies. Given that most of the emphasis was placed on the architectural typology of villas and their visual and sculptural decoration, the sites themselves have rarely been the subject of quantitative studies (Grigoropoulos 2013). Therefore, we lack a quantitative assessment of how much agricultural production these structures indicate, and how this varied between settlement types. It is therefore difficult to prove agricultural specialization, although it is clear that certain areas favoured specific kinds of cultivation. The most productive areas like Emathia or the valley of Strymon continued probably to be intensively exploited (based on the distribution of sites) but there are no obvious signs that marginal lands like the Delta of Nestos followed a similar pattern. The same applies also for intensification of production which is regarded as a product of the presence of large estates. Based

on the existing evidence we can only assume that significant differences existed in the scale of production and the degree of specialization.

2.3. Pastoralism

Although agriculture was a fundamental economic activity, it does not fully describe the people's relation to the land and its resources. From the Bronze Age onwards in Macedonia the people of the countryside were not only farmers but also herders/pastoralists whose large flocks lived in permanent or seasonal habitats (Hadjigeorgiou 2011). Many mountainous and alluvial areas were suitable for large scale animal husbandry (especially cattle and horse) which in cases it might have taken the form of specialized stock raising. Epigraphical evidence from the coastal city of Abdera in Aegean Thrace (Loukopoulou *et al.*2005, 186–190) indicates that cattle and horse raising in the area could supply not only local markets but also interregional ones. The combination of mountain areas and plains with a mild Mediterranean climate and the extensive coastal zones guaranteed the availability of great summer and winter pasturage.

Other areas such as the uplands of western Macedonia were more suitable for pastoralism which – within the old kingdom – was favoured by transregional movement without the same constraints that regulated movement from one city-state to another. We can only assume that this kind of pastoral activity continued in the Imperial period with new agents, wealthy landowners that could afford larger flocks within their vast estates. The shift from the importance of small farming allotments towards the rise of large estates may have actually favoured the exploitation of animal husbandry on a large scale (Alcock 1993a, 88). Evidence from elsewhere in the empire indicates that during the Imperial period villas might have got involved in the business of specialized stock raising as was probably the case with the so-called farmstead D in Lete (see Chapter 16) where remains of different types of horses along with stables were found (Adam-Veleni *et al.* 2003, 87–90).

Agricultural production, land and animal husbandry and forestry (Nigdelis 2007, 74) may have constituted the greatest part of the economic resources of the area, but Macedonia was also rich in other sources, the exploitation of which seem to have intensified during the Imperial period (Borza 1982). Stone and especially marble quarrying and mining had long roots in the economy of Macedonia. Mining especially was linked not only with the business and strategic plans of central administration (either Macedonian or Roman) but also with the life and settlement pattern of numerous Thracian communities (especially in the lands east of Nestos) that seemed to have specialized in the extraction and smithing of iron and other metals. Clearly the scale of exploitation and consequently the economic impact of these resources varied from area to area but in areas though such as eastern Macedonia and Chalkidike, where metalliferous ores and marble deposits were abundant, the impact of such activities would have been as important as agriculture.

2.4. Mining

Macedonia was, and still is, the richest metalliferous region in Greece, a region rich in iron, copper, silver, gold, lead, zinc and magnesium all important sources of revenue for the Macedonian kings (Vavelidis 2004). The areas of eastern Macedonia, especially between the River Strymon and the massif of Lekani, Pangaion and Rodope mountains, along with Thasos and North-East Chalkidike were the most important in terms of mineral resources. The iron deposits of Thasos (Photos 1987, 73–74), are the largest in Greece, while the manganese-rich iron deposits of the mainland opposite Thasos, namely the region of Palaia Kavala, consist of iron oxides with the additional presence of lead, zinc, arsenic, gold and silver (Photos 1987, 74–76). Nickel-rich iron deposits can also be found in the area around Edessa and Kastoria in western Macedonia (Photos 1987, 83–86). In Chalkidike, large-scale metal processing is mostly known from Ottoman records, but some metallurgical remains date back to the Roman and Late Roman times (Photos 1987, 87). The region (still named Skouries = slag) contains an enormous size of sites from which slag has been recovered in vast quantities and in layers so thick upon the ground that until recently a lively industry of collection and resmithing was active. Occurrences of gold and silver mineralization into quartz veins have been found in Kavala (Mt. Pangaion, Mt. Symvolo, Palaia Kavala), Drama, Serres (Mt. Menikio, Metalla, Angistro), Stanos in Chalkidike and Almopia (Vavelidis 1994). The ancient sources mention (Strabo 3, 354) gold mines in the Strymon Delta, in the Mt. Pangaion and in the broader area of Philippoi. The rich resources of the area attracted early the Thasians who established their dominion on the coast (the *Peraia*) and started to exploit (based on the experience from the rich metalliferous ores of their own island) the rich mines on Mt. Lekani and Mt. Pangaion, such as the famous (Hdt. 6, 46) *Skapte Hyle* (Koukouli-Chrysanthaki 1990). The deposits also became the target of the Athenian policy with the foundation of Amphipolis (438 BC) being the most tangible evidence for controlling the area and the trade of metals while later during the Hellenistic period substantial amounts of gold and silver were being extracted from ore deposits. Mining galleries and shafts for extraction of oxidized sulphide ore rich in hematite and slag concentrations (especially of iron) have been traced in different sites across Macedonia such as Petres where rich in iron oxide ores may have been exploited in the region (Photos *et al.* 1986a) or Maroneia in Thrace where pottery dates the opening of the galleries to the 2nd century BC (Nerantzis 2009, 105).

During the Imperial period, mining (Nerantzis 2009, 105–107) and extractive metallurgy (especially of gold and silver) intensified under imperial control. Livy (xlv 29, 10–11) mentions that the Romans kept under their control the exploitation of gold and silver mines within the First Macedonian Meris (between the rivers Strymon and Evros) leaving the exploitation of the copper and iron mines to the native population, presumably the Thracians who had a long tradition on these practices (Kostoglou 2003). A reference in the Theodosian Code (AD 386) to procurators of the mines (*procuratores metallorum intra Macedoniam*) verifies the state-central control of the mines of Macedonia although some of them may have been leased (as indicated

by an inscription found in Philippoi) by contractors (*conductores*) representing the interests of wealthy local families (Nigdelis 2007, 74).

Ancient metallurgical sites are almost by definition difficult to be accurately dated since many continued to be in operation till the Ottoman times and the beginning of the 20th century. Evidence for large-scale mining of iron comes from several parts of Macedonia chiefly North-East Chalkidike (Papastathis *et al.* 2014) and the area of Mt. Pangaion (Vaxevanopoulos *et al.* 2012). Smelting installations and other remains of iron production are particularly prominent in sites (Photos 1987, 300) such as at Vathytopos, Piges Angiti, Sidirochori, Kalapoti, Kimmeria and Domatia while silver and gold extraction sites have been located at Palaia Kavala, Makrychori, Eleftheroupolis, Tria Karagatsia and Dipotama (Fig. 3). In all these areas either ironstone or bog iron is present in considerable quantities. Survey, sampling and analysis of ore from galleries and slag heaps at a number of sites on Thasos (Photos *et al.* 1986b) associated with the lead/zinc deposits in the western part of the island suggested extensive exploitation probably during the Roman period as well as earlier. Archaeological evidence from the area of Aegean Thrace shows that silver and lead were extracted from sites such as Thermes and Kotyle near the Greek Bulagarian borders (Nerantzis 2009, 107), copper from the area of Kimmeria at Xanthi while iron smelting sites have been identified at the fort of Kalyva, and in Messembria.

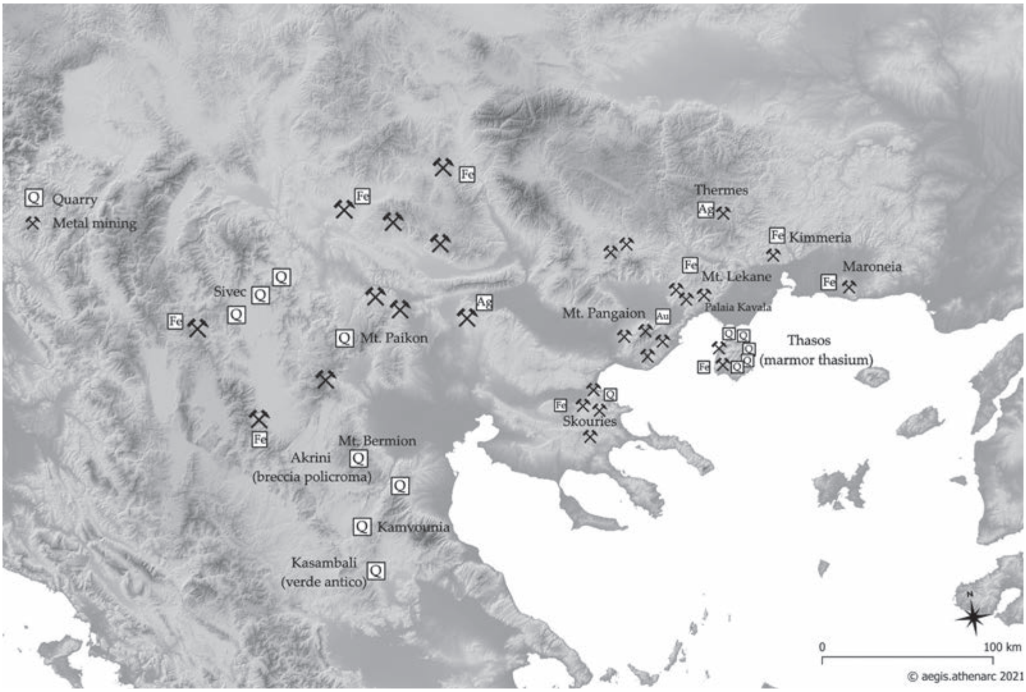

Figure 3. Mines and quarries in Macedonia (digital map author).

2.5. Quarries

One of the greatest resources (for building and trade) for Macedonia were the significant reserves of high-quality stones (gneisses and schists) and marbles (dolomitic and carstic) that exist in the area and were systematically quarried and exploited since the Archaic period. In the Roman period, urbanization and the desire to have outstanding qualities of marble created a demand for building materials on an unprecedented scale (Russell 2013a). This inevitably led to the intensification of production and the exploitation of reserves that did not always have the best quality as was the case with the quarries of grey, white coarse-grained marble of Mt. Kamvounia. The Imperial period also saw the better organization and logistics of quarrying and trade since many quarries passed into imperial ownership (Hirt 2010) or to the possession of institutions or persons with resources to target markets at increasingly further distances from the extraction quarrying location in response to greater demand and rising prices. Research (Russell 2013a) has shown that during this period a new trade system involved stockpiling, trade on demand, standardization of sizes and prefabrication of many architectural elements such as columns, capitals and bases which were kept in storage until they were finally transported to their final destinations.

Systematic survey in western and Central Macedonia and in the state of North Macedonia has provided us with a list of more than 20 ancient marble or stone quarries (Vakoulis *et al.* 2002; Russell 2013b with bibliography) mostly open quarries that were formed as terraces on the sides of hills or mountains (Fig. 3). Deposits of waste materials, unfinished blocks or sculpted blocks and more rarely of tools indicate that some of them continued till the Early Christian period or even later. Many of these, such as the ones at Mt. Paikon, Aiani, Stobi, Pieria, Drama, the Kamvounia mountains, Edessa and Mt. Bermion, provided marble of medium and poor quality, destined mostly for local building projects, but others, such as the marble (marmor thasium: Aliki, Vathy, Marmaromandra, Saliara) quarries of Thasos (Herrmann 1990) or the quarries of Larissa (*verde antico*: Kasambali) and Akrini in Kozani (Lazzarini 2007, 245–252) (*breccia policroma della vittoria*) were of better quality and exported on a regional or wider scale.

Most of the highly valued marbles of Macedonia were (and still are) quarried in Thasos (Bruno *et al.* 2002). Of extreme importance for the marble trade of the island were the dolomitic reserves within the field of Thasos–Cape Vathy, which included the nearby Saliara area, a region known for its pure white dolomitic marble quarries (Wurch-Koželj and Koželj 2009). Other important quarries were located along the south coast. Among these was Aliki, situated on a small peninsula and other extended quarry areas like Marmaromandra and Phanari where dolomitic and carstic marble had been extracted since at least the 6th century BC. Mineralogical and petrographic analyses and provenance studies have shown the predominance of high-quality Thasian marble in urban projects across the province, especially in Thessaloniki, where as argued by Th. Stefanidou-Tiveriou (2009a), the extensive use of Thasian marble

played an important role for the image of the city as a metropolitan centre between the 2nd and 4th centuries AD. For many building projects and statuary, the Thasian marble seems to be the standard white marble preference, especially when it could be transported easily via the sea or rivers. Recent studies have shown that Thasian products had reached through the Axios River deep into areas south of the Demir Kapija gorge, the natural barrier to north Pelagonia (Barbin *et al.* 1999).

Wherever this was not possible, or the cost was extremely high, local quarries produced stones and marble that fit local demands better. In some cases, some of these local quarries produced dolomitic marble of high quality as is the case with the quarry that was identified 10 km from the city of Prilep at the site of Sivec in the eastern part of the Zlatovrv mountain range on the north-eastern border of the Pelagonian plain (Niewöhner *et al.* 2013). This was a fine-grained dolomite which was widely used in building projects in Pelagonia. The exploitation of the Sivec reserve seems to have commenced only in the Roman period, probably in response to the high demand of marble for the embellishment and enlargement of the cites in the area like Stobi, Styberra, Heraclea Lyncestis and Doberos.

Chapter 3

Decline and continuity of settlements: urban and rural sites

Although Macedonia is often regarded as underdeveloped in terms of active cities, historical research has shown that more than 100 active urban centres (if one adds the epigraphic evidence) made up the core of the old kingdom till the Late Hellenistic period.[1] Although, clearly, we don't observe the same dense distribution as in Achaea, still there was an abundance of active cities (Fig. 4). Most of the Macedonian settlements like Ichnai, Allante, Alloros, Kyrrhos and Pydna developed into urban agglomerations in the Classical period, under the influence of the architectural forms of the Greek *apoikiai*, while the rise of important urban agglomerations such as Beroia, Mieza and Edessa, as well as the construction of monumental architecture, has been mostly linked to the economic, political, and cultural policies of Philip II.

Evaluating of course the urbanization of the Roman period strictly in terms of the preceding period is difficult (Karambinis 2018) since the criteria for defining a settlement as polis were not always architectural. Based on the existing archaeological evidence it is almost impossible in many cases to accurately determine the size of the inhabited area of a city or the density of the population. The century encompassing the end of the Late Hellenistic period and the period of Augustus and his immediate successors (*c.* 50 BC–*c.* AD 50) may be invisible archaeologically but it was clearly the key formative period in the culture, economy and society of the province, particularly for the establishment of new power centres such as Thessaloniki and Beroia or the emergence of new cities like Heraclea Lyncestis, Stobi and Styberra.

The impact of the turmoil of the late 1st century BC, especially the pressure from the presence of large Roman armies and the social and economic reforms that arose from the destruction of the old kingdom obviously played a role in urban hierarchies and prosperity of settlements (Papazoglou 1988; Karambinis 2018). The constant friction with the northern tribes but most importantly the clash of large professional armies caused demographic, economic, and infrastructural damage particularly to the heart of

[1] The most complete record of the cities and towns of the Roman period in Macedonia remains the fundamental work of F. Papazoglou (1988), largely repeated by the Barrington Atlas (Talbert 2000). These are complemented by Hatzopoulos and Paschidis 2004 for the central core of the Macedonian kingdom; Flentsted-Jensen 2004 for the large area between Axios and Strymon and Loukopoulou 2004 for the area east of Nestos.

Figure 4. The urban network: old and new cities (digital map author).

the kingdom. At the end of the Hellenistic period the towns entered a period of pressure which in some cases led to abandonment. Many cities had suffered during the conflicts with the Thracian invaders and mostly from the struggles between the contesters of the Roman Civil Wars. Coupled with the new pressures (taxation) of Roman administration (Nigdelis 2007, 65) and the impoverishment of the local elites (Daubner 2019), the turmoil led probably to a general stagnation of urban life. Very illustrative is the example of the still unidentified town that was excavated during the 1990s at the site Petres in Amyntaion (Adam-Veleni 2000a, 38–42) in western Macedonia. The town which occupied the largest part of a flat hill consisted of well-made stone-built houses arranged in insulae and separated by cobbled stone streets. Large storage spaces and pits containing a variety of agricultural products have been unearthed in the akropolis sector. The city seems to have been flourishing during the 3rd–2nd centuries BC but its end came abruptly in the mid-1st century BC at the time of the Roman Civil Wars with only a small population returning to the Akropolis area in the mid-1st century AD (Adam-Veleni 1996). Acts of war, as was probably the case with Petres, or physical phenomena, like the earthquake that struck Pella in the middle of the 1st century BC (Akamatis 1989), always provide the basic interpretative framework behind urban abandonment and decline. The real effect, though, of such exogenous events is difficult to evaluate archaeologically (Gatzolis and Psoma 2021). While the influence of an act of war is a factor that may be hazardous, few such events have been responsible for sudden decline, as was the case with the destruction of Olynthus (348 BC) by Philip II (Dem. 9.11 and 56, 19.267).

Instead, new approaches point out that change in occupation, settlement size and prosperity, as reflected in monumental architecture and material culture, are usually the result of longer processes, such as the restructuring of urban hierarchies or the shift of economic interest to new zones. Therefore, the term urban "decline" can be better discussed in terms of the broader transformations in the political landscape (*e.g.* the rise of new pro-Roman centres) of the region during the Late Hellenistic and Early Imperial period, rather than the result of a single event. As the Late Hellenistic period wore on, other pressures such as the emergence of new urban centres (like Stobi see Papazoglou 1986) and the general destabilization of the area under the pressure of the clashing armies of the Roman contesters hindered the growth of many cities.

We should also have in mind that, as the aftermath of the war with the Achaean League in South Greece showed (destruction of Corinth in 146 BC), the Roman state could violently deal with communities or cities that showed resistance on a practical or on an ideological level by replacing them with ones whose loyalty was guaranteed or, in more extreme cases, with new ones, as was the case with the foundation of Roman colonies. This is dramatically underlined in the case of Aigai and Pella. These monumental royal urban centres whose social, cultural and economic role had been firmly established in the Classical and Hellenistic periods, stopped functioning during the Late Hellenistic period with significant consequences for the urban hierarchy. The last phases of occupation on both sites are difficult to conclusively date. However, the evidence suggests a serious socioeconomic collapse. Aigai, where decline was followed by collapse of buildings and inability to reconstruct or rebuild, offers the most direct evidence for abandonment (Drougou 2009; Kyriakou and Tourtas 2013). Here we have all the indications of a larger process of desertion: the disuse of public spaces and buildings, the lack of new buildings; the absence of significant material culture. In the case of Pella on the other hand, these apparent symptoms of urban decline may be more indicative of change in a settlement's location with the foundation of the Roman colony in 30 BC and the development of a new urban nucleus next to the harbor (Lilimpaki-Akamati 2011). In Pella abandonment and collapse occurred over a long period which most importantly didn't seem to affect all parts of the city in the same way.

For many other cities, especially for cities with a long history, the evidence for urban abandonment is far from clear and the disuse of the individual buildings or public spaces has not usually been dated with precision. Disrepair of public spaces, minimum building activity and lack of material culture that characterizes the landscape in many cities in Chalkidike can be regarded as signs of process of decline that completed gradually during the Imperial period. There is no concise reason why such well-provisioned cities failed but it is clear that this was a process that started long before the Roman period. All of them, despite their previous economic, religious and social role during the Classical period, were apparently unable to maintain their monumental architecture, as their population was reduced, and they failed to attract elite beneficence. Various reconfigurations in the Hellenistic period exerted pressures on the existence of many cities with the creation of new centres like Kassandreia (316/315 BC) which was given much of the Pallene peninsula (Diod. Sic. 19.52; Robinson and

Graham 1938, 9–13). Independent poleis some of them with long history like Mendi (Flentsted-Jensen 2004, 832; Livy 31.45.14) became now subordinate to the new centre and gradually lost their political independence. In the case of Thessaloniki towns and communities (26 according to Strabo) around the Thermaikos were abandoned and their population transplanted to the new city (Strabo, fr. 7a.1.21).

The scale of the phenomenon is of course under discussion. Towns contracted or declined but many (if not most of them) continued to be political and administrative foci of continued occupation. Archaeological and epigraphic evidence confirms settlement activity in many supposedly "failed" cities. Epigraphic evidence from the 2nd and 3rd centuries AD shows settlement continuity in many small cities such Anthemountas or Kombreia in Chalkidike (Flentsted-Jensen 2004, 830). We can guess that many others remained in operation. The archaeological traces of this are usually blurred but some are clear, and the general process is beyond doubt. At Akanthos, for instance, evidence from the cemeteries indicates continuity at least until the 3rd century AD (Flentsted-Jensen 2004, 824). This should serve as a caution against seeing settlement patterns only from the point of view of decline. Complex processes took place during the late 1st century BC in many areas of the Roman world and as new evidence comes to light the picture (especially the one of decline and urban contraction) is constantly changing.

Yet conquest did seem to have had an effect on the number of towns and rural settlements (Papazoglou 1988; Karambinis 2018), while the significance of certain cities like Beroia and Thessaloniki seems to accentuate. As the Imperial period brought new requirements of civic life, some cities met them with success, while others did not. The strategic interest to Roman authority and the long-established economic role that many cities had on their broader vicinity were important factors that guaranteed the success of a city and the viability of their institutions. We can single out Thessaloniki and Beroia as "winners" in the new urban hierarchy established after the annexation. Given their position, the one at the head of the Thermaic Gulf and the other at the crossroads of the main route from the west, and their status as provincial capital and seat of the Koinon respectively (Touratsoglou 2006), both benefited as commercial and cultural centres hosting multinational communities. We can also add secondary centres that were positioned along major transportation routes, as was the case with Heraclea Lyncestis, Philippoi and in agriculturally rich areas like Serres.

In areas such as Paeonia and Pelagonia that previously lay on the fringe of the old kingdom, economic integration reinforced the prominence of old sites that took advantage of the new conditions. While a focus for continuous human activity since the Iron Age, it was primarily during the Imperial period that many of these sites like Styberra, Eidomene or Paroikopolis (in modern Bulgaria) experienced urbanization and increased significance (Papazoglou 1988, 372). All these sites saw an extensive development of their monumental infrastructure in the period between the late 1st–early 4th century AD, in the form of the construction of public buildings, theatres, spectacular domestic units and temples. Other factors can also be adduced for prosperity such as the proximity to the limes and the interior of the Balkans where large bodies of troops were stationed.

The shift towards new cities and the increase in their territories, which were populated by a well-integrated series of villas, villages and other forms of urban settlements represent the major development in early imperial Macedonia. By the early 2nd century AD the cities along Via Egnatia had become a network of nodes and markets giving them economic and possibly cultural importance. Apollonia (Makaronas 1977) near Lake Volvi or Heraclea Lyncestis (Dzidrova 1999) are both illustrative cases since they boomed in the post-conquest period as hubs through which goods flowed from east to west. This restructuring of the urban hierarchy in favour of cities along the route of the road is clearly reflected in the construction and foundation of new urban centres like Traianopolis (Parissaki 2018, 18, n. 23) or Ulpia Topeiros (Loukopoulou 1989) in Aegean Thrace. Their development in the early 2nd century AD has been seen as inextricably related to the importance of the road as an economic vector which downgraded the importance of the Greek cities on the coast like Abdera (Lolos 2007, 286). The linkage with the road is further supported by the fact that some of these cities like Traianopolis were responsible for its maintenance and infrastructure. In all cases the new cities seem to have developed on the site of pre-existing Thracian settlements located on important nodes along the course of the road like the bridge on River Nestos or the junction of Via Egnatia (site Agios Georgios) with a road leading along the Evros valley to Via Diagonalis. Fully assessing their role in the formation of the provincial landscape is, nevertheless, difficult, since their epigraphically attested prosperity cannot yet be sustained by solid archaeological evidence. Excavations like the one conducted by M. Koutsoumanis in Plotinopolis (Koutsoumanis *et al.* 2009) (at the site of modern Didymoteichon), where impressive mosaics of exceptional quality and a very impressive well have been found amidst a public complex provide a glimpse of the urban landscape of these cities but generally the evidence is scant.

3.1. Roman colonies: a new addition to the provincial landscape

The most important reform in the post-civil war provincial landscape was the foundation of colonies (Rizakis 1996; 1997; Katsari and Mitchell 2008), composed of Italian veterans, in four pre-existing cities (Dion, Pella, Kassandreia, Philippoi and in Upper Macedonia, the *municipium*-autonomous community of Stobi), that were already important political and economic and religious centres of the old kingdom (Dickenson 2017, 210–214). The nature of the phenomenon in Macedonia is closely linked to the need of Roman generals to reward soldiers (always in the spectre of potential trouble making) with land allotments taken or confiscated by pre-existing populations. Centuriation (Chevallier 1972; Rizakis 2015) or the division of land in predefined land allotments that followed (or more accurately preceded) the foundation of new Roman cities was another conscious attempt to control and hierarchize rural space. It is no coincidence that the earliest colonies, those of Dion and Kassandreia, were most probably founded by Quintus Hortensius Hortalus (Nigdelis 2007, 61) provincial governor of Macedonia and henchman of Brutus in the year 43 or 42 BC after the assassination of Caesar, while Philippoi was colonized by veterans and supporters of

Mark Antony's army immediately after the Battle of Philippoi in 42 BC. A new wave of veterans and settlers arrived in the cities after their refoundation by Augustus following his victory at Actium, as stated in his *Res Gestae*, where he cites Macedonia as one of the regions in which he settled his veterans (Nigdelis 2007, 84, text 6).

Besides the establishment of veterans, the foundation of Augustan colonies was conditioned by a variety of other reasons such as the need for control of strategic points and the road to the East, rejuvenation of the local economy that suffered so much during the prolonged period of turmoil, creation of new opportunities for land exploitation and commerce, and cover of the demographic gap caused by the wide-scale conscription and loss of human life in battles. In the case of Philippoi, the decline brought about impoverishment and downgrading to the status of a village or *polisma* (Strabo, *Geography* 7.41 terms it "κατοικία *μικρά*", a hamlet), until its refoundation as a Roman colony.

The establishment of the colonial order (Rizakis 2003) seems in general to have brought prosperity to the old cities although the four cities followed diverse courses of development over the Imperial period (Giannakopoulos 2017). Philippoi, with a strong veteran character and symbolic power that was vested on the city in the Augustan period became a regional economic centre, where Roman cultural traditions and Latin language prevailed till Late Antiquity. In both Dion and Philippoi the creation of colonies brought a radical change on the built environment, with extensive modification of the pre-existing public spaces and the construction of new Roman-style buildings. Philippoi and Dion also provide the model for the political governance of these cities (Nigdelis 2007, 70–71) which like the other Roman colonies of the Empire were modeled on Rome with an assembly of the people (*populus*, *plebs*), a local council (*ordo decurionum*, *decuriones*) and magistrates (*magistrati*) such as the *duoviri iure dicundo*, the two chief magistrates of the colony and holders of juridical and executive power. The same line of development can be observed for the *municipium* of Stobi. Although the development of the city was part of the same broad process of urbanization that led to the upgrade of many sites of the northern borders of the region and to the emergence of new sites along the Axios valley, Stobi stands out as unique in its monumentality, its Roman character and in the wide range of buildings found within it.

3.2. Urbanization patterns

Although the transition from the Late Hellenistic to the Imperial period varied from city to city and from region to region, in general the urban network was relatively stable under the Principate and the major urban centres of the core of Macedonia strengthened their positions at the top of the provincial urban hierarchy. Textual evidence indicates that smaller cities or villages were often grouped around a more important urban centre (Hatzopoulos 1996, 49–104; Nigdelis and Souris 1997), forming a *sympolitia* (union) such as the Pentapolis or Tripolis known from eastern Macedonia, while in Upper Macedonia, where the degree of urbanization was lower, the traditional *komai* (villages) formed *politeiai* (unions of individual communities), normally bearing the ethnikon, the name of the local *ethnos* (nation or tribe).

A general pattern in urbanization is the increasing differentiation between medium and large size cities. In this constant struggle new factors such as the location on Via Egnatia or a coastal location played a role in the success of the city. Within this context territorial boundaries underwent a constant process of change or adjustment. Increase of the land (*chora*) or loss of land was vital for the economy of many medium-sized cities and occasionally could have worked as reward or punishment from central authorities. Over the period rivalry about status was constant, for instance between Beroia and Thessaloniki for the title of *neokoros* (Tataki 1988, 259–261, no. 1114; Burell 2004) and the prestige of holding the provincial imperial cult, since it was the only way to secure protection and survival (Nigdelis 2007, 72). To the factors of success, we should probably add the special weight of the past or places of worship of particular importance. For instance, although many communities in Chalkidike descended to the level of polisma, Aphytis survived, despite its close proximity to Kassandreia, probably due to its renowned sanctuary of Ammon Zeus which became a source of civic strength and a source of attraction for elite donation.

Nevertheless, precise reasons why some cities failed and others did not are difficult to establish. Based on the existing data the circumstances under which hierarchical tendencies that created competition or decline between the cities of the region remain unclear. Epigraphical evidence that is used to prove asymmetric power relations between the cities of the area (*e.g.* between Abdera and Ulpia Topeiros) can have more than one reading. The ability for instance of the Abderitans to claim (through imperial intervention) their ancestral land (*πάτριος χώρα*) back from the new Roman centre of Ulpia Topeiros (Loukopoulou *et al.* 2005, E78–E79, 254–256; Loukopoulou 1987, 66, fn.22) shows a wider range of reactions than what a strictly hierarchical system would have allowed.

3.3. Rural settlement patterns

Outside the large urban centres, the plan and architecture of rural settlements (villages, hamlets or little towns) remain largely unknown. Rescue excavations, and small-scale surface surveys have revealed remains of rural houses, buildings, cemeteries, farms, villas and warehouses along the road network but also around larger and smaller urban centres and harbors. Archaeological work has highlighted a great diversity of rural sites across the province and the important role that these settlements played in the economy of the area. The density of rural settlements appears to peak in the mid-2nd century AD, and level off thereafter until the early 5th century AD. In many cases the persistence of rural settlement (sometimes spanning many centuries) indicates that these locations remained desirable, because of their agricultural potential and the accessibility to resources and building materials.

Although the specific pattern of rural settlement differs from area to area, the densest areas of settlement appear to be those closest to the cities divided into small properties, where mixed farming (of olives, grapes, fruits and cereals) was practiced. The archaeological surveys conducted in the territories surrounding the urban centres

on Beroia, Edessa, Amphipolis, Stobi, Thessaloniki have indicated a high concentration of sites (mostly small and medium farms) in the peri-urban zones and larger agricultural/pastoral villages along the main transport network from the late 1st century AD until the early 5th century AD. The relationship between an urban centre and the surrounding rural settlements is best manifested in the territory of the Roman colony of Philippoi (plain of Drama), where systematic archaeological research has spotted several rural settlements of the Middle Roman to Late Roman period situated every 3–10 km along major routes. Archaeological work in combination with epigraphic evidence has revealed wealthy and large settlements whose greatest expansion came a century and a half after the foundation of the colony. These *vici* (*vicus* = village), some of whose names such as *Medicani*, *Satriceni* and *Coreni* are ethnic or derivatives of local god names, enjoyed a form of administrative and legal independence (Loukopoulou 2004, 854), probably indicative of a territorial organization very similar to that in the western provinces. These agricultural settlements located near water resources (such as the Angitis River) and along transportation routes (such as Via Egnatia) emerged (originally as pre-Roman settlements) as centres of agricultural processing, storage and marketing. Production and storage facilities have been found at rural sites across the plain of Drama, while the production and export of the vintages of the Pangaion and Phalakron mountains, centred in Philippoi and the nearby port of Neapolis, continued into the Late Empire.

Excavations of settlements in Chalkidike such as the villas on the first peninsula (Pallene) or along the valley of Strymon, all in locations of great agricultural potential, and all of substantial size and architectural pretension, point to a rise in rural settlement in the Middle and Later Empire. The growth of rural settlements was not restricted to eastern Macedonia and the plain of Drama or along the fertile zone which extends between Mt. Paikon and Mt. Bermion (Emathia) where archaeology has produced evidence of extensive rural settlement, especially from the Hellenistic period (late 4th century BC) until Late Antiquity. In fact, some of the largest and most sophisticated of these settlements have been excavated in western (Upper) Macedonia and Pelagonia, where sites complete with a basic grid plan such as Aspri Poli (Kefalidou 1995, 576–578), Polymylos (Karamitrou-Mentesidi 1999a) or Boufari in Boion have been discovered. It is no coincidence that hundreds of rural sites of the Late Hellenistic and Early Roman periods have been spotted by surface research in Upper Macedonia (see for instance Chondrogianni-Metoki 2015 for the vallley of Haliakmon). Inscriptions have preserved the name of some of these (Hatzopoulos 1996, 117), such as the village *Gaimeion* near Mieza, but their connection to an archaeological site is not always possible.

Overall, the archaeological evidence and the material culture assemblages show that many rural sites thrived during the course of Middle and Late Roman times with many of them continuously occupied from the Hellenistic until Late Antiquity and Byzantine periods (Chondrogianni-Metoki 2015, 60). This relative stability of the rural landscape would have been reinforced by, the continued fertility of the land and the operability of the roads.

Chapter 4

Via Egnatia and the provincial road network

The importance of Macedonia as a corridor to the East is reflected clearly in the creation of a network of roads (Staccioli 2003) which established and secured Roman authority during the Late Hellenistic period (Wilkes 2005, 146–148). Macedonia and the interior of the Balkans were from very early on in the expansion of the Roman state a strategic target which ensured access to the great resources of Asia (Syme 1999). After the submission of the Macedonian kingdom in the Third Macedonian war (168 BC) the Roman state continued as we have seen for another century to have a strong military presence in the area of the South Balkans fighting against the Thracian kings or the Celtic tribes of Dardania, securing in that way the roads to the East (Walbank 2002). Later – at the end of the 1st century AD – the increased military activity of the Romans in the Balkans, especially, during the Dacian campaign of Trajan depended on links with a road network that extended south to Macedonia and Thrace. One of the basic (and oldest) axis of this network was Via Egnatia, a large road which was constructed as a trans–Adriatic continuation of Via Appia (Fasolo 2003; Lolos 2007; 2008). As it is known from other areas of the Roman world, the construction of this military road used pre-existing tracks that exploited the natural morphology (Bishop 2014). Textual evidence indicates that an extended road network existed in Macedonia and coastal Thrace before the advent of Rome (Bouzek and Graninger 2015, 17). This is possibly the road that the main branch of the Persian army followed during the invasion of the early 5th century BC (Hdt 7.115) and the road that supported the strategic interests of the Argeadic and later Antigonid kingdoms (Koukouli-Chrysanthaki 1972). Tracing down the physical remains of this road is naturally difficult and thus we are mostly based on epigraphical (Bouzek and Graninger 2015, 18) or secondary evidence (Archibald 2013, 10) like trade or transhumance (Efstratiou 1999, 146–147). The latter was one of the main productive forces of the region which required roads and tracks between winter and summer pastures, some of which are still in use. Overall it can be said that this main road, the predecessor of Egnatia, in conjunction with other roads that led to the interior formed a network that allowed warfare, trade and religion to be applied not only at a local level but also at a regional level. Tribal turmoil, dynastic wars and lack of systematic infrastructure must have made the use of the road difficult (App. *Mac* 9.5 who characterizes the road as *ούκ εύμαρής*

– difficult) or inaccessible. It was exactly these difficulties that Lucius Calpurnius Piso had as proconsul of Macedonia (57–55 BC) in maintaining the stability on the area (Cic. *Prov. Cons* 4; Loukopoulou 1987, 82, n. 98).

Via Egnatia linked Dyrrachium (Fig. 5), the great Adriatic port of the Illyrian coast, to Kypsela (Strabo 7.7.4) and Byzantium, covering a total distance of 1120 km. The route is reconstructed largely based on ancient itineraria (Miller 1916; Dilke, 1987), accounts of European travelers (18th–19th centuries) and physical remains like miliaria, the cylindrical road signs (Collart 1976) which provided the distance from Dyrrachium or from the closest urban centre which was responsible for the erection of the milestones within the limits of its territory. These milestones not only showed the distance but also demarcated which sections of the road belonged to which cities. This was important in respect to maintenance work and repairs since after the 2nd century AD, increasingly the work was carried out by cities and local populations along the route as compulsory exactions.

From Dyrrachium, the Egnatia followed the valley of River Shkumbin to Lake Ohrid and Heraclea Lyncestis (Bitrakova-Grozdanova 1999) where it turned south-east towards Lake Vegoritis, Edessa, Pella and Thessaloniki (Hammond 1974; Hammond and Hatzopoulos 1983). Thessaloniki was the most important station towards the East but, also, an intersection to the roads leading to the interior of the Balkans. From Thessaloniki the road led to Amphipolis and the Strymon valley and then north of Mt. Pangaion to Philippoi and Neapolis (Samartzidou 1990). From Kavala the road continued eastwards towards Lake Vistonis (though the exact route of this section

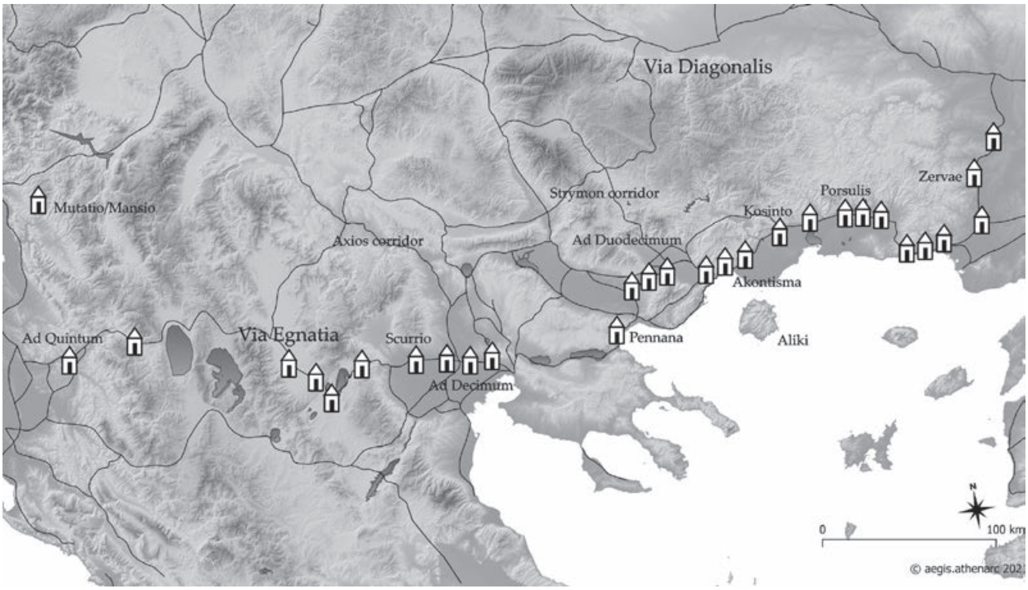

Figure 5. Via Egnatia, the road network and road stations (digital map author).

is uncertain) and Traianopolis, an important new administrative centre near the Evros River, from where it passed through eastern Thrace (Dadiras 2003) and ended in Byzantium (later Constantinople). Two miliaria (road signs), discovered near Thessaloniki and near modern Kavala (170 km apart) respectively, bear the name of the builder, the proconsul Cn. Egnatius who served in Macedonia sometime between 146 and 120 BC (Romiopoulou 1974). The appearance of the same name on two miliaria which were separated by a great distance is indicative that the route was very possibly designed and constructed as a single project, while the original decision might relate to the difficulties that the revolt of Andriskos (148 BC) brought to the Roman state and authority in the broader region of Macedonia (Walbank 2002). Hence, at least till the Early Imperial period, when Thrace (AD 46) and Moesia (AD 9) became regular provinces, the road was used as a military avenue for the quick response against Thracian and Celtic invaders. Later in the 1st century AD the road lost its military use since the Roman troops used the transportation network closer to the Danube border. Despite the loss of military significance, the road was frequently repaired – under Trajan, Septimius Severus and Caracalla – and was mainly used for travel and trade.

The journey along Egnatia (estimated approx. 40–60 km per day) was supported by a number of changing stations that offered food and accommodation (*mansiones* and *mutationes*). These stations are known from the Late Roman itineraries (books quite often illustrated with maps that provided information for travelers, in particular names of locations where lodging could be found, and the distances between them), such as the Antonine (*Itinerarium provinciarum Antonini Augusti*, see Cuntz 1929) the Bordeaux (*Itinerarium Hierosolymitanum*) itinerary and the *Tabula Peutingeriana* (4th-century AD painted map – *itinerarium pictum*, see Talbert 2010, 134) but a safe archaeological identification is often more difficult to be achieved. It is admittedly difficult to differentiate between the different types of stations and between them and other rural sites such as large villas. In general the *mutationes* were smaller, including an inn and stables, while *mansiones* were larger and located at a distance of 18–20 Roman miles (approximately 25–30 km) in good terrain, and from 6–12 miles (13–18 km) in mountainous regions. Another two types of road stop lodgings the *tabernae* (simple woodsheds for stop) and the *praetoria* (buildings for officials on the road) are equally difficult to identify, although a building in Dion has been identified as a *praetorium* (see Chapter 7). Although the itineraries record the existence of many such stations (23 between Thessaloniki and Kypsela by the Bordeaux itinerary) few have been securely identified. One of these stations is the building found near Elbasan in Albania along the Shkumbin River (ancient Genusus), possibly the station Ad Quintum – at the fifth mile (Fig. 5), a lavishly built station which included its own bath and nymphaeum (Ceka 1976, 286–312). Other building complexes, such as the one found in the early 1980s near Kyrrhos (Adam-Veleni 1998, 1–16) in Central Macedonia (*mutatio Scurrio*) were probably more humble buildings with rooms around a central court, barns, facilities for the pack animals and baths. The datable finds, mostly coins, indicate a long lifespan for the building from the middle of the 1st

century BC until the early 5th century AD. A Late Roman complex that stood on top of a hill near Asprovalta has been identified with an inn or even the known from the itineraries *mutatio Pennana* (Adam-Veleni 2000b, 698–700). The location (admittedly far away from the road) where the complex stood offered good control of the area. This (in combination with the presence of a defence wall) has been seen as the result of the turbulent period of the late 4th–early 5th century AD when the building is dated. Undeniably, the identification is not certain but the layout of the spaces, the defensive wall, the large space for food preparation, the existence of a latrine and the large inner courtyard indicate that the building could have functioned as a safe road station for travelers and their horses that would stop there for food or spending the night. Another station of Via Egnatia, the *mansio Acontisma* (*It. Ant* 321.2) or *mansio Hercontroma* (*It. Burg.* 603.8), has been identified with a fortress built on a hill east of Nea Karvali near modern Kavala (Koukouli-Chrysanthaki 1972) which controlled the passage to the Nestos basin.

The counterpart of Via Egnatia (Fig. 5) was a long route of great strategic importance that crossed the central Balkans from north-west to south-east connecting the central reaches of the Danube to Asia Minor (Torbatov 2004, 94; Wilkes 2005, 148). As in the case of Via Egnatia (Arist. *On Marvellous Things Heard*, 104) the road (or sections of it) was probably used by many tribes before the establishment of Roman power. It became a road only after the annexation of the Thracian Kingdom in AD 46. The road known as *via militaris* or *via diagonalis* (due to its obvious diagonal course) and later as *basilike odos* (for the Byzantines) and *carski pat* (for the Slavs) was the continuation of another great military route (Via Claudia Augusta) that followed the Rhine border. Both of these two major arteries, which set out from Danube or the Adriatic coast followed a parallel course from west to east, running through the largest urban centres and junctions (like Naissus or Thessaloniki) of the Roman period in the Balkans. However, they also existed as important north–south roads that followed the course of rivers like Axios (or Vardar in Slavic) and Strymon (Struma in Slavic) and allowed the transit from the Aegean region to the Central Balkans and the Danube (Fig. 5). Starting from the metropolitan centre of Thessaloniki a road following the valley of Axios, led through the Iron Gates to Stobi and Skopje (Scupi) and from there through the Morava valley to Naissus and the Via Diagonalis (Mirkovic 1960; Wilkes 2005, 148). The Axios–Morava corridor might have facilitated the Roman advance to the north and included many important points of strategic interest. One of these, the Roman colony of Scupi (Birley 1986) was an important crossroad from where someone could follow secondary roads either to the west and Heraclea Lynkestis (Via Egnatia) or towards the north-east through the Osogovo range to the upper Strymon (Struma) basin and Serdica. Another natural corridor was the Strymon–Struma valley which led from Amphipolis (Petrova 2018) through the Roupel defile to Serdica and from there down the Iskar valley to Oescus, an important military base in the south bank of the Danube. Numerous other smaller or larger roads completed this basic road

network (Madjarov 1988; Pikoulas 2002; Chrysostomou 2009) ensuring connectivity between different cities or towns of the area (Fig. 5).

Despite the barbaric raids and the continuous power struggle between the different Roman parties, especially in the turbulent 3rd century AD, the functionality of the network continued even in later periods. Recent research in the development of rural Macedonia (Dunn 2004) during Late Antiquity showed that the raids did not disrupt greatly the transportation networks. In subsequent periods, the eastern Roman Empire (Kuezler 2011) continued to use and sustain the old Roman network and there is abundant literary evidence about travel and transportation during medieval times.

The increased popular interest in Via Egnatia (boosted by the construction of the modern motorway that bears the same name) is reflected also in new archaeological studies, such as the seminal work by Y. Lolos (2008) who focuses on the different socio-economic and cultural aspects of the road. Approaches as such have instigated a new theorization of the road as a socio-cultural corridor that channeled new ideas and social practices and served needs that transcended the narrow margins of North Greece. In this reading, Via Egnatia is depicted as a means for a radical reshaping of the environment with a significant impact on the settlement patterns of the area (Loukopoulou 1989; Kallintzi 2018, 28). One of these results is the construction and foundation of new urban centres along its route like Traianopolis or Ulpia Topeiros (Loukopoulou 1989) and the decline of the old Greek coastal cities like Maroneia or Abdera (Kallintzi 2011; 2018; Lolos 2007). Another is that the main economic interest now shifted from the coast to the interior (Kallintzi 2018, 27) which was transformed to a new kind of landscape that was shaped by the road and its potential for connectivity with the broader network of Roman roads across the empire.

Part II

Built environment: the archaeological evidence

Chapter 5

The archaeology of built environment. A short history of the archaeological research of Roman Macedonia

It has long been recognized that the built environment (and by this, I mean and consequently treat all the built features that constitute the human habitus: buildings, monuments and spaces created or modified by people) reflects not only social and economic conditions but also collective or even individual identities (Cadman and Payne 1990; McClure *et al.* 2007). Besides their architectural interest which has been analyzed in numerous publications, the features that comprised the built environment mask collective or individual needs and aspirations, which speak about the people and the society that created them and their reaction in the face of new social and cultural conditions. It is exactly the presentation of these features that Part II of the book is devoted to. This will be done through 12 chapters that will take us from the centre of the city, the area of the agora and the great buildings of administration and leisure, to the countryside, the world of the villa rustica and other more mundane forms of rural settlements. The first task though must be to outline briefly the course of archaeological research over this large area of the Aegean world.

The field of Roman antiquity has had a long but not always positive presence in the archaeology of Macedonia. The "Roman period" (the period between 168 BC and early 4th century AD) was generally viewed as an interlude between the "heroic" period of expansion in the Late Classical–Hellenistic period, and the Byzantine period which – inextricably linked with Greek Orthodoxy – marked the material culture and architecture of the area. In the fiery political climate of the formation of the Modern Greek state (especially after its expansion to northern Greece during the Balkan Wars in 1912–1913) scholars mainly sought a connection with the "nobler" past of the Temenids and Antigonids, the era of Alexander the Great rather than the "indifferent" world of the Roman period "*provincia inermis*".

Since the 1960s, however, there has been a reaction (hesitant at the beginning) against this line of thought, which was instigated by discoveries and excavations in major Roman centres such as Dion, Philippoi in Greece and Stobi in today's North Macedonia. By the 1980s the time was ripe for a wider deployment of archaeological

evidence in understanding the process of incorporation, adaptation and occasionally assimilation to the new requirements of the interconnected Roman world (the process that we conventionally call *Romanization*, see Woolf 2014). The task was taken by several scholars (predominantly from the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki) and archaeologists working in the Greek Archaeological Service, most notably D. Pandermalis, G. Velenis, G. Gounaris, Ch. Koukouli-Chrysanthaki, P. Adam-Veleni, P. and A. Chrysostomou, D. Triantaphyllos, A. Mentzos, G. Karamitrou-Mentessidi, the historians F. Papazoglou, A. Rizakis, M. Hatzopoulos, P. Nigdelis, the recently deceased I. Touratsoglou and above all by Th. Stefanidou-Tiveriou whose views on the material culture of the Roman period determined the mainstream of thought until today. Systematic archeological work by the École française d'Athènes in Philippoi (originally by P. Collart and P. Lemerle during the 1930s and more recently by M. Sève) and Thasos (especially the work of J.Y. Marc on the Roman phases) and the involvement of the American School of Classical Studies at Athens in Stobi (J.R. Wiseman) have also broadened our knowledge about Roman Macedonia. In recent years, a new generation of archaeologists from Greece, Bulgaria and North Macedonia has delved deeper into the subject, bringing a new perspective to the interpretation of urban and rural landscapes.

Archaeological evidence has always played a major role in the historical narrative of Macedonia (probably greater than other areas of the Greek world for which more written sources are available). From the 1950s onward, archaeological exploration accelerated with systematic excavations at prominent sites like Philippoi, Dion and Stobi. There has also been an enormous increase in the number of rescue excavations. The construction boom of the early 21st century in Greece and the increased demands for infrastructural projects such as the construction of the modern highway Egnatia presented new opportunities for archaeological exploration. The great amount of public funding available from the late 1990s to the 2010s led to the discovery of various sites of Roman interest across northern Greece. This archaeological work was quite often accompanied with environmental, zooarchaeological and faunal evidence which has the potential to change our perception of ancient Macedonia and the knowledge base of Macedonia's Roman past.

Although Roman-period features dominate the archaeological landscape of Macedonia, the interest in the archaeology of the region during Roman times only recently started to reach maturity, covering a wide range of attitudes from the traditional denial of any impact on the urban or rural landscape to the recognition of a deeper influence of empire-wide trends. Archaeology up to about the 1990s and sometimes beyond that dwelt mainly on the nature of art and architecture of the Roman period as an extension of the Classical world. Attempts to describe Roman-period features of the built environment concentrated mostly on identifying forms of buildings or construction techniques with Roman associations. If we add to this the widespread idea that the influence of Rome was small in areas with a highly developed urban culture, then it is not difficult to see why the culture of Roman period – though admired for

a sort of engineering advance and lavish splendour – was viewed as inferior (or not so academically attractive) to the previous periods.

Over the last 25 years, however, archaeologists have become increasingly interested in the cultural change, abandoning the model of a passive "classicizing" urban landscape. The deconstruction of views that restricted the impact of Roman architecture to the west and a growing body of archaeological evidence that showed change in the material culture of the Greek-speaking areas after their incorporation into the Roman Empire brought an increasing interest in the concept of "Romanization", strangely at a time when the concept was gradually started to become anachronistic and discarded in the archaeology of western Europe (for the use of the term in Roman Greece, see Papaioannou 2016). The real growth of interest in Roman Greece is associated with S. Alcock who in 1993 published her seminal work on the landscapes of Roman Greece.

Susan Alcock's idea of a dynamic and not passive landscape which was affected in various ways by its incorporation in the Roman Empire attracted much support from many archaeologists. Archaeology now was employed to study the changes in the rural and urban landscapes and the interpretation of the evidence. This new approach has greatly transformed our understanding of the Roman past and attempted to write new narratives and long-term histories. Today the history and archaeology of Macedonia is understood in detail and serves as primary evidence for the testing of major theories of cultural dynamics. The picture emerging is of a diverse provincial landscape into which the rich archaeological evidence has opened some new ways of understanding the landscapes of the area. This has been clearest in the study of the development of public spaces, and it is with this that I begin the overview of the archaeological evidence.

Chapter 6

The transformation of old and the construction of new public spaces: agoras and fora

In the centre of the ancient Greek city lay the quintessential public space for the Greek world, the agora: an open space dotted with small shrines or ancestral monuments and surrounded by civic and religious buildings (Hölscher 1998; Evangelidis 2014, 337). This basic spatial idea remained dominant in the organization of the urban landscape until the Hellenistic period, when, in many of the great cities of the Greek-speaking east, the agora started to be transformed into an architecturally defined monumental space, following developments in contemporary architecture (Sielhorst 2015; Dickenson 2017). The concept of treating public space as a single architectural unit was applied in many of the Greek cities that were founded or renovated during the 4th century BC and among them the Macedonian capital Pella where the the enormous peristyle of the agora might actually have been one of the leading examples of this style of political space (Akamatis 1988; Dickenson 2017, 57–62; for commercial use, see Marc 1998, 12).

Given the prominence of the agora in public life, we know surprisingly very little about the pre-Roman agora in the cities of the area. Public complexes like the systematically excavated agora of Thasos are generally poorly represented in the archaeological record and only few pre-Roman agora complexes in Greek cities along the coast, such as Stageira (Sismanidis 1993, 433), have been archaeologically identified. We know even less for the cities that constituted the heart of the Macedonian kingdom, cities like Europos, Skydra or Edessa. Cases like Mieza (Allamani *et al.* 2009, 17–30; Koukouvou and Psara 2011, 225) where, at the site Belovina–Kopanos, a large complex of 4th-century BC stoas framing a central court (300 × 150 m) is being excavated, indicates that it is likely that these features (in varying scales) were integral parts of most city layouts in Macedonian cities (Hatzopoulos 1996, 108), such as Aiane in Kozani (Karamitrou-Mentesidi 2011a, 209–222). But how much all this was part of an active traditional native practice or the product of influence from elsewhere in the Greek world, still remains unanswered (Errington 2007, 275–282).

Nevertheless, the example of the peristyle agora (see Drougou 2011, 197–208), so clearly attested in Pella, Mieza (Kopanos) but also in Demetrias in Thessaly (Dickenson 2017, 65–66), probably took an even more substantial shape during the Hellenistic

period, with new complexes like the Hellenistic agoras of Byllis and Buthroton in Epirus (Rinaldi 2020, 49–54). It is against this background that one must view the development of public space during the Imperial period. Thessaloniki, the provincial capital of the Roman province of Macedonia, reached a peak during the Early Imperial period (Adam-Veleni 2011), and after the late 1st century AD its urban landscape was enriched by a series of monumental buildings, among them a new agora which was built in a central position of the walled Hellenistic city. There, pre-existing buildings, structures and workshops (which according to one theory belong to a Hellenistic agora) seem to have been levelled to make way for a new civic centre built on a grand scale around the end of the 1st century AD (Adam-Veleni 2003, 146–155). Archaeology indicates that part of the south and the east stoa along with a rectangular building that has been identified as Bouleuterion dates to this early (1st century AD) phase (Evangelidis 2010, 108–123; Adam-Veleni 2001, 1–17)

The impressive remains that still dominate the centre of the modern city (Figs 6–7) belong to a complex that started being redeveloped during the Antonine period,

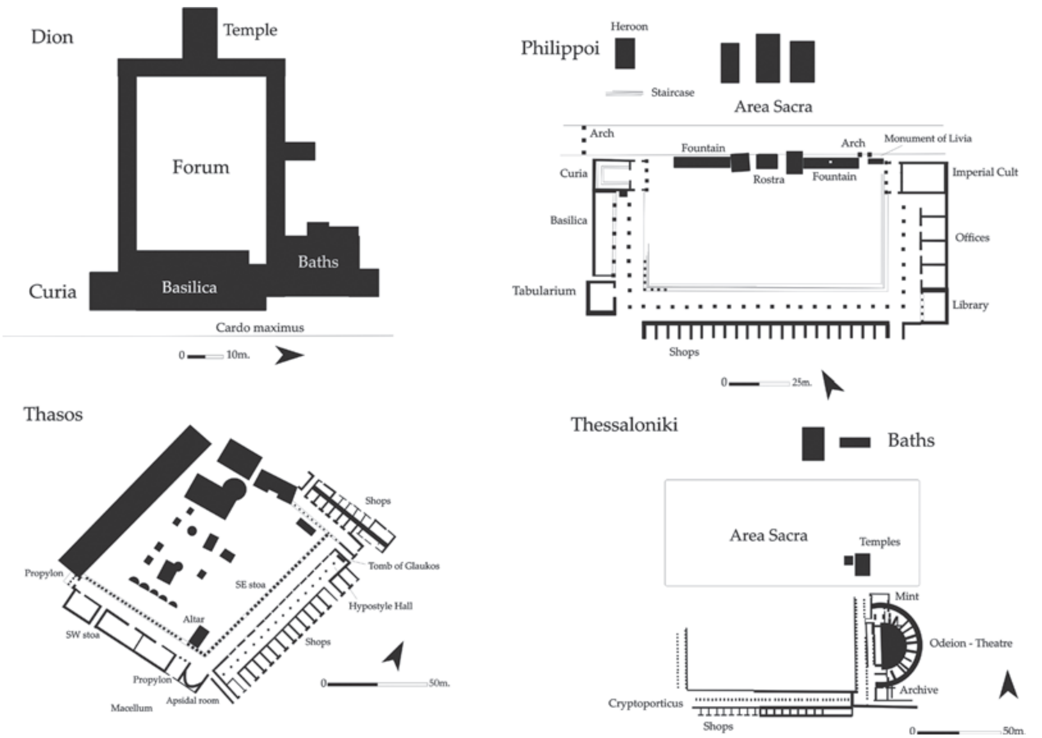

Figure 6. Agoras and fora: Dion, Philippoi, Thasos and Thessaloniki (digital drawing author). Thessaloniki based on: Vitti 1996, fig. 7. Thasos: Grandjean and Salviat 2000, fig. 21. Dion: Christodoulou 2007, 180, fig. 1. Philippoi: Sève and Weber 2012.

when an enormous three-sided, Π-shaped portico with double Corinthian colonnades surrounded an oblong square with dimensions of 146 × 90 m (Georgaki and Zografou 2001, 65–86). The plan was rectangular, with proportions of 1:2, occupying the length of three and a half insulae of the ancient city, together with the width of the streets between them. It was very similar in plan to the smaller agora of Philippoi, being TT-shaped, with the long north side of the central court opening to a west–east road below the present Olympou Street.

Large public buildings, among them an archive, a mint (Velenis 1996a, 49–60; Evangelidis 2010, 113–115) and an elaborate Odeion–Bouleuterion (Kalavria and Boli 2001, 46–47), were found behind the east stoa, while a large double cryptoporticus supported the south stoa of the complex. Shops opened off the south portico towards a paved road and facing them along the south side of the road were still unidentified large public complexes (Fig. 7). Parts of the west stoa of the complex which have been found under the modern buildings (at modern Garbola street) attest to a lavishly decorated building.

Figure 7. The cryptoporticus and the south side of the agora of Thessaloniki (photo: author).

Archaeological research in the centre of modern Thessaloniki has provided evidence that the excavated part of the agora was part of a larger monumental civic centre, which was terraced northwards to counter the natural slope of the city north of the main decumanus. Archaeological and textual evidence shows that the area south of the complex included a second monumental square dominated by monumental buildings, such as the *Chalkeutike Stoa* (Stoa of the Coppersmiths) or large public complexes. The north side of the agora opened towards a raised terrace (separated from the agora by one of the decumani of the city), which originally was thought to have supported the stadium (Fig. 6). The excavations (in the 1930s and later in 1970s) revealed two important buildings of Roman Thesssaloniki grouped together in the south-east corner of the terrace, opposite the east wing of the agora. The larger eastern building, a long (23 x 16 m) rectangular building with a niche in its north side, was originally identified as a library. Inside the building, reused in Late Roman walls, fragments of inscriptions and statues were discovered, among them the colossal heads of the acrolithic statues of Athena and the emperor Titus (Stefanidou-Tiveriou 2001a, 389–411). Next to it, to the west, stood a small cultic edifice (8.5 x 9.2 m) with three large niches opening in each one of its three walls (see Fig.16). The recent and new interpretation of the buildings of the north terrace as temples of the imperial cult (Stefanidou-Tiveriou 2009b) indicates that this raised terrace could have been an *area sacra* bearing a series of religious buildings facing onto the open square in the south. It is unknown whether a great temple, like the *Capitolium* that M. Vickers (1972, 156–170) imagined at the site of the Basilica of St Demetrius, stood in the centre of this terrace, but the resemblance to the plan of the forum of the Roman colony of Philippoi is so obvious (see Fig. 6) that it has even been suggested that both complexes were the work of a single architect (Velenis 1996b, 491–499)

The Antonine building programme in Thessaloniki can be clearly regarded as the culmination of the importance of the city over the previous two centuries of Roman administration. This was a plan executed on a grand scale which intended to span the ascending terrain with a huge, monumental complex, developed in different layers. The plan was adapted to the irregularities of the terrain (at the south end the ground dropped) by adjustments like the construction of a huge cryptoporticus of 146 m in length. This supported in the form of a terraced platform the south side of the agora and framed the south road. The great vaulted roof of the stoa, which is still visible at the archaeological site (Fig. 7), is one of the most distinctive examples of monumental architecture of the period, a reflection of the ideas that made up provincial architecture.

This was also an elaborate architecture and among its many characteristics features we can notice the use of richly carved architectural schemes, the use of marble parapets between the columns, the mosaic floors in the east stoa, the emphasis on height underlined by the use of more than 200 Corinthian columns made of Thasian marble and the possible presence of an upper floor. Viewed from this perspective the complex in Thessaloniki can be seen as the manifestation of a Hellenistic tradition

which was at the same time shaped by empire-wide spatial ideas. The layout is a mixture of a living Hellenistic tradition (especially the terraced plan and the odeion in the middle of the east side) with the engineering abilities of contemporary Roman architecture. The details of the plan were closely matched to that of the Forum of Philippoi, but the proportions were much bigger. The grandeur of the complex was overemphasized by the towering terrace and the hillside.

However, it is in Thasos (Dickenson 2017, 189–194) that someone must turn for a well-documented example of the transition of a pre-existing public space to the new public environment that the time required (Fig. 6). As in other cities and towns where the built environment of the city was already developed, the development took the form of the addition of buildings and monuments that tried to fit within the existing urban framework. Here, the centre of the town beside the harbour had been laid out in the Late Classical period, most probably in the 4th century BC. This was essentially an open area of public monuments and temples loosely placed within the city grid. The agora included structures and monuments originally dating back to the 5th century BC like the Temple of Zeus Agoraios (Grandjean and Salviat 2000, 76) or the tomb of the first colonist Glaukos (Grandjean and Salviat 2000, 69–70). Stoas framed the open space on the west and north while a huge altar of the 3rd-century BC occupied the less developed south-east corner. When the site was redeveloped towards the late 1st century BC–early 1st century AD, the place took the form of an enclosed space, framed on four sides by porticoes. This was achieved mainly through the construction of two large stoas along the south-east and south-west side of the space, which until then remained unoccupied (Fig. 6). The south-west stoa was a long building of the conventional Doric order, behind which opened large rectangular halls for communal use (*hestiatorion*), while the south-east stoa, a building which had a rather unexpected basilical form (Marc 2001, 505), had a protruding wing on its western end which ran some distance along the south-west corner of the agora to connect with the south-west stoa (Grandjean and Salviat 2000, 70–71 with reconstruction drawing; Marc 2001, 505). This protruding wing comprised two distinct elements, namely an elaborate propylon and an imperial cult sacellum (see Fig. 14), both axial to the Hellenistic altar and the macellum that opened to the south. Although the agora in Thasos is one of the best excavated and documented sites in North Greece, the process of the architectural framing of the space still remains a matter of debate. For instance, J.Y. Marc one of the excavators of the site and scholars that has dealt extensively with the architecture of the stoas, prefers a Hellenistic date for the construction of the south-west stoa and the propylon that allowed entrance from the side of the harbour, thus seeing the process mostly as a Hellenistic phenomenon rather than a Roman one (see Marc 2001, 504 and the discussion in Dickenson 2017, 192).

What seems to have happened in the urban landscape of Thasos (Marc 2012a) is that with the instigation of large-scale building under the early empire, building activity was channeled mostly into traditional architectural forms but with enough space for innovation. The tight and slightly irregular plan of the agora presents all the

problems of an urban centre that was continuously occupied for many centuries. It is characteristically at Thasos that we find the problem of available space successfully handled by the addition of buildings behind the stoas of the square. These buildings served various needs, such as, for example, the imperial cult (see for instance the so-called courtyard of Komis outside the west entrance) or retail (see the macellum behind the south-west stoa), and complemented the functions of the agora proper.

Two cities about the development of which we happen to be well informed are Philippoi and Dion, both bearing the status of Roman colony (Fig. 6). Better than any other public space in Roman Greece, they offer a picture of Roman-style spatial design. Excavations in Philippoi have shown that the Roman city immediately south of the akropolis was laid on a rectangular grid with different orientations. The elongated city plan was determined by the course of the old Hellenistic wall and the steep akropolis that dominated the site (Sève and Weber 2012, 11–12). Although the site was occupied during the Hellenistic period, the earliest exact remains are of the Early Imperial period. The Hellenistic city seems to have been shaped by topographical convenience at the hillsides of the Akropolis but under the status of the Roman colony it was remodeled. The nucleus of the Roman colony, the early forum was laid out on a site which based on the excavation data was not that of the Hellenistic agora (if there was any). The excavations by the École française d'Athènes of the deeper strata under the pavement of the central court of the forum brought to light the humble remains of a structure that seems to be a farmhouse (something that creates its own questions about the size and the expanse of the original Hellenistic city). Thus, the site of the Hellenistic Agora remains a desideratum (Sève 1985, 870).

This early forum was built in the mid-1st century AD around an open space south to the axial street which crossed the city and acted as the main decumanus (Evangelidis 2010, 263–265; Sève and Weber 2012, 12–17). Simple stone-made rooms and offices were grouped around a large court with a long row of shops occupying the south side of the complex. The exact architectural details of this early forum are uncertain; but as in many northern Italian fora, the main decumanus of Philippoi seems to have separated this main area of the forum from a higher lying terrace which might have functioned as a ritual space; an *area sacra* (Fig. 6). Thus, the square and the terrace formed a single architectural complex divided in two parts by the main street that crossed the city. The public square opposite the terrace was fully integrated into the urban grid and had access to both main roads of the city. As its Antonine antecessor owed much to the munificence of wealthy local citizens like the elite families who dedicated a large pedestal (7.70 × 2.80 m in the north-east corner of the square) carrying statues of different priestesses of Livia, the Diva Augusta. The prominent position of the monument in the layout of the early forum (Sève and Weber 2012, 16, 76, no. 21) speaks not only about the importance of the cult in the public life of the colony, but also about the leading part that women played in social hierarchy (Abrahamsen 1987). Another woman, a certain Proba (Pilhofer 2009, 233) was one of the great donors of the colony during the Antonine rebuilding of the forum.

The later development of the new monumental forum (see Figs 6 and 8) retained the general lines of the Claudian physiognomy. This was a rectangular court (100 × 50 m) framed on its three sides by complexes or rooms while it was open to its north side where the solid podium in the form of *rostra* formed a platform for public orators (Sève and Weber 2012, 72–75, nos. 16–18). This was framed by two large and long basins which constantly filled with water coming from a newly constructed aqueduct (Pilhofer 2009, 271–272, no. 213). The complex was dominated by what seems to be the *Capitolium* of the colony (Sève and Weber 1986, 579–581) which was terraced above the square and separated from the rest of the complex by the street and an impressive staircase (Fig. 8). Following a well-known pattern of Roman architecture, facing the square stood three prostyle frontal temples dedicated to the Capitoline triad. Spolia from these three different temples of Corinthian order have been found embedded in the walls of the Early Christian basilica A that later occupied the site. A smaller prostyle building which was originally thought to be a Hellenistic heroon, a remnant of the old city, has recently been interpreted as a classizing Roman building.

During the course of the 2nd century (probably in the Antonine period) all the forum buildings with the exception of the *rostra* were rebuilt in marble and a Corinthian-style porticus was added. The architectural ornament was lavish with pavements of marble and rich architectural details carved in local marble. The dedicating

Figure 8. The forum of Philippoi from the terrace of Area Sacra (photo: D. Mouzos).

magistrate in many of the buildings was a high-rank Roman official (*quaestor pro praetor*) of senatorial class, G. Modius Laetus Rufianus and the dedicatory inscriptions were written in Latin (Pilhofer 2009, 229). Other high-rank local officials like a certain G. Oppius (Pilhofer 2009, 233) were involved in the construction/reconstruction of other public buildings.

The new design (Zarmakoupi 2018, 281–83) included at the north end of the east side a large new prostyle temple dedicated to the imperial cult, the addition of a temple like curia or assembly hall, of a simple basilica hall, a longitudinal hall with marble veneer and columns, a tabularium and a library. An elaborate portico of the Corinthian–Ionic order surrounded and united the complex. The symmetrical placement of buildings in pairs (curia – temple of imperial worship / library – tabularium / basilica – complex of four rooms) is a feature found in other fora of the period and stems from the effort to organize public spaces on standard architectural forms. The forum of Philippoi can be regarded in this respect as exemplifying the Roman axial spatial design from which so many public spaces of the Roman world were more or less directly derived (Evangelidis 2014, 351). Although the surviving complex is not as early as the original colonial foundation it is precisely the form of plan that these urban institutions were from the beginning designed to accommodate. Among the most characteristic designs it suffices to mention the monumental terrace bearing at least three frontal temples, the emphasis on central feature, the axial design, etc. All this has very close affinities with the design of northern Italian fora.

Like the complex in Philippoi, the small forum in the Roman colony of Dion (see Fig. 6) is an illustrative example of the sort of compact design which reflects basic Roman-inspired planning (Pandermalis 2002, 420; Evangelidis 2010, 201–202). In both cases this was an architecture that reflected the civic qualities of a Roman city. As in Philippoi, the monuments of pre-Roman Dion are scant. The only substantial monuments of Hellenistic Dion, the theatre and the sanctuary and temple of Zeus that brought the city its wealth lie outside the walled city. The first impressions of the urban layout are dominated by the rectangularity of the plan, but the excavations have shown that this could have been a continuation of the Hellenistic city. A strict enclosed plan was adopted in the late 2nd century AD for the forum that was laid out along the main paved road (*cardo maximus*). The plan consists of an elongated open space flanked along its two sides by stoas and enclosing in the west side a small temple possibly dedicated to the imperial cult. Along the south corner of the east side behind the rooms there was a bath complex (see Chapter 11). The only other monumental building was a large basilica incorporating second-hand material on the east side (Christodoulou 2007, 179–184; Evangelidis 2010, 200–201). The basilica, which occupied the greater part of the east side, was a plain rectangular hall, at the south end of which a smaller rectangular hall (divided internally by steps) was used as a *curia* (see Chapter 7). Although the basilica, *curia*, baths, temple and stoas form a single architectural unit, this seems to have belonged to an even larger complex that extended over the entire insula and included a small odeion, a lavish bath

complex and a row of shops looking outwards into the main paved street through a stoa (Pandermalis 1989, 29–34; Zarmakoupi 2018, 289). A streetside portico and the monumental formation of the exterior wall of the basilica gave an exterior unity in the complex. To complete the picture of the Roman city, one may mention a large lavishly built polygonal building that occupied the corner of the insula, north to the forum (Zarmakoupi 2018, 289).

The forum appears to date to the late 2nd or early 3rd century AD like the rest of the city. Of the earliest phases of the colony, we know almost nothing. Apart from some necessary buildings or monuments the built environment of the early colony must have been conditioned by the buildings and infrastructure of the existing Hellenistic city (Pingiatoglou *et al.* 2011). One of these could probably have been the large public building which gave the building material for the construction of the civic basilica (Christodoulou 2000). There is no means of telling whether there was a reason for the radical transformation of the city during the 2nd century AD. However, as in Philippoi, the overall layout and the design of the main public space (forum) shows a strong Roman character, with emphasis on central feature(s) (Evangelidis 2010, 205).

Although beyond the geographical scope of this book, another important civic centre calls for a brief mention. The same Italian influences (but much older) are visible in Butrint, the large city on the north Ionian Sea coast (in modern Albania), which received Italian settlers during or after the Roman Civil Wars (Hernandez and Çondi 2008, 284). There, the old Hellenistic agora to the east of the large Asklepeion complex seems to have been redesigned into an elongated forum in the late 1st century BC or early 1st century AD. The central paved court was framed by a tripartite cultic building on its north side and an early Italian-influenced basilica on its east side. This was a colonial architecture with strong western overtones, an architecture that someone would have expected in a Roman colony. Of the other two Roman colonies, Kassandreia (Misailidou-Despotidou and Germenis 2008) and Pella (Chrysostomou 1995; 2004) little is known. It would have been interesting to examine whether they followed a design which derived almost all its essentials from western Italian practices. The almost total lack of remains of Roman Kassandreia constitutes a serious gap in our knowledge. We can only guess that, as in Corinth, the architecture and plan of the city retained the character of the previous period with some additions in monuments and buildings that facilitated the civic life of the colony. Pella, unlike Kassandreia, was founded on empty ground, 2 km away from the old capital. Although parts of monumental architecture, among them parts of a circular temple have been found within the city (Chrysostomou 1995), the excavations have not given a clear answer about the plan and layout of the public spaces.

Outside these four examples, we only have occasional glimpses of other civic centres since most have almost entirely disappeared under later buildings and beneath modern cities like Serres. Unfortunately, little is known about the form of the main public space in the large urban centre of Beroia which stood on relatively high ground. From the accounts of the excavations in the heart of the urban fabric it

seems that the agora was early, perhaps Hellenistic. Remains of Hellenistic buildings and spolia of isodomic masonry have been discovered in the vicinity of the church of St Antonios, which diachronically seems to be the heart of the city. One of them, the early phase of which goes back to the Late Classical period, seems to have had monumental dimensions and was renovated with marble floors during the Imperial period (Brocas-Deflassieux 1999, 62). Another large building that was discovered along the modern Venizelou street was converted to baths. Most interesting, however, is a square structure at Odos Kentrikis and Vermion (Allamani 1990, 361–63). Measuring 13 × 13 m on the foundations, this has a floor of marble slabs and a marble toichobate. A circular structure at the centre was edged with slabs, and probably supported either a nymphaeum or some honorific monument. It is not easy to date, but from the construction it appears to be Early Roman. It stood for a long time and was probably situated at the centre of the agora. A large poros base immediately to the south supported a marble exedra. At Demetrias the great Magnesian urban centre in Thessaly the Roman period marked a radical reorganization of the urban layout. The "sacred agora" (Marzolff 1994, 62–64; Batziou-Efstathiou 2002, 29), a large public space surrounded by stoas which contained the temple of Artemis Iolkia, the former patron deity adjacent to the Macedonian palatial complex (Milojčič and Theocharis 1976, 5–45) was abandoned probably during the Late Hellenistic period as the urban centre shrank and shifted closer to the harbour north-east of the Theatre. There, numerous spolia belonging to important honorific statues, public buildings and public documents indicate the existence of a second Agora (Stamatopoulou 2018, 355).

It is unfortunate that so little from the main public spaces in the newly founded cities in Macedonia and Aegean Thrace such as Ulpia Topeiros, Plotinopolis, Traianopolis or Nicopolis ad Nestum has survived, because here, if anywhere, one would have seen the application of the new trends in spatial design. Given the upgraded status and wealth of cities previously underdeveloped like Stobi, Heraclea Lyncestis or even Parthicopolis/Paroikopolis (in modern Bulgaria) it is logical to ask to what extent their urban centres were shaped by forces and ideas that were at work in the area during Imperial times, influences coming from the interior of the Balkans, the west or even the east. Here in contrast to already developed urban environments, like Thasos, these new spatial ideas could find vigorous expression in the planning of the new cities across the northern areas of the province. At best we catch only a glimpse of the way that such influences might have formed the urban landscapes of these cities. Archaeological evidence from the most excavated sector of Stobi and Heraclean Lyncestis asserts this notion. The well-known Building with the Arches received recently the working title of Roman Forum (see Chapter 7). The exact nature of this building (see Fig. 10) which came to light during the 1970s is disputed but it certainly seems to have been located at or close to the urban centre of the city. Excavations in Nicopolis ad Nestum during the 1980s revealed an orthogonal grid with intersecting streets in the middle of which the excavators locate the forum/agora of the city (Petrova 2012).

As these cases begin to demonstrate, any emphasis on the Hellenistic tradition of spatial layout must be balanced against clear signs of empire-wide contemporary design. Renovated complexes like the agora of Thessaloniki or the forum of Philippoi played a part in this balance. The axial layout, the emphasis on entrances and exits, the prominent location of structures did much more than create a monumental space. Despite the fragmentary character of the evidence the picture that is emerging is broadly consistent. The porticoed agora belong to the repertoire of Hellenistic urban building but the strong axiality and compactness we see in cases like Philippoi, Dion and Butrint are distinctively western ideas.

In conclusion, it should be remarked that many aspects of the development of the main public space in Macedonia reflect its character as the meeting place between forms usual to Roman planning and those which were the result of long-established Hellenistic urban ideas. For Macedonia this is mostly seen in Thessaloniki but also in the colonies. Of special importance would have been to ascertain the relationship between new (forum) and old (agora) public spaces (Evangelidis 2014), an issue which still remains open due to different approaches and interpretations, since, in many cases, as at Phillipoi, the old agora itself has not been securely identified.

Before turning to what individual buildings reveal about the built environment, one central question remains to be addressed. How different was the civic centre from that of the previous periods? There is not an easy answer to this problem for a variety of reasons, one of them being the fact that surprisingly we know very little about pre-Roman or pre-Hellenistic period agoras in Macedonia. Based on the existing evidence it seems, nevertheless, that for the majority of cities (especially small or medium-sized ones) it was probably the Imperial era that signaled a clear tendency to marble decoration and architecture in the agoras. Costly renovations with extensive use of marble seem to have been vital for the monumentalization of the public space in many small cities which could not afford the construction of new ones (Evangelidis 2014, 352–353). Additionally, marble and other high-quality stones (like granite) were extensively used for paving the court of many agoras, especially peristyle ones (Thessaloniki, Philippoi, Dion, Thasos). Marble or stone pavements not only upgraded the architectural image of many agoras, but they also helped towards cleanliness and hygiene, conditions which to a great extent are regarded to be related to monumentality. New finds, such as the portico (late 1st century BC) found in the area of the agora of the small Macedonian city of Kalindoia (Sismanidis 2006; Brozou 2020) or the elaborate Hadrianic Gate of the agora in Maroneia (Kokkotaki 2003) indicate that important innovations of planning and style were adopted by many cities of various sizes throughout the province. The redevelopment of public spaces is a phenomenon seen throughout the province. Drawing on this (limited) evidence we can reconstruct different aspects of public space formation, some emphasizing the pre-Roman layout, others more attuned to contemporary designs.

Chapter 7

Public and administrative buildings

The emphasis given on complexes such as the agora or the forum quite often masks the importance of individual buildings as centres of public life or landmarks that contributed to the city's prestige and monumentality. For the purposes of this chapter, the term "public" denotes buildings intended for the handling of public affairs and either accessed by the general public or not. Nevertheless, specific functions can rarely be documented archaeologically and identifications (despite the elaborate titles and names occasionally given by the excavators to buildings) are far from certain, especially for rooms or spaces behind the stoas. Only when artefacts or features (or even more rarely when we have construction deposits) directly related to a certain activity come to light, can we be certain of possible identifications. In Thessaloniki, for instance, the discovery of four copper-smelting kilns, with one of them containing dozens of fragments of clay moulds for casting coin blanks, inside a building with three rectangular niches in the northern edge of the east wing of the agora (Fig. 6) indicates its use as the city's mint (Velenis 1996a, 49–60). However, as mentioned above, such cases are rare.

In contrast, some public buildings, like bouleuteria or basilicas, followed a specific plan that makes their identification easier. Gatherings of the most important political institution of the Graeco-Roman city, the local council (*boule* or *ordo decurionum*) took place in buildings with a cavea (curia in the west, bouleuterion or odeion in the East), which was usually found in a prominent place in the agora or the forum (Balty 1991). Nonetheless, even for this group of buildings, identifications are far from certain. In Thasos, for instance, where a small building with a cavea has been found south of the agora (see Fig. 22), J.Y. Marc (1994) gives reasons for supporting its identification as an odeion, rather than a bouleuterion, which has been suggested, and prefers a construction date at the end of the Antonine or beginning of the Severan period as opposed to the accepted Hadrianic date. In Thessaloniki the east side of the agora during its early 1st-century AD phase was dominated by a large rectangular building which according to the excavators must have functioned as a bouleuterion (Velenis and Adam-Veleni 1994), similar to the one discovered in Nyssa in Asia Minor, where the theatrical cavea was enclosed in what seems to be a paved rectangular space. This original 1st-century AD building which had a tiled orchestra floor was later replaced

by an odeion (Meinel 1979, 369; Kalavria and Boli 2001, 148–150), identified as such by an inscription (Vitti 1996, 187, n. 76). Although the connotations of the name odeion are clear, buildings as such had often alternating functions, either as assembly rooms or lecture and music halls (see Fig. 21).

In Roman colonies, the *curia*, seat of the *ordo decurionum*, is normally situated next to or near the basilica, either as a free-standing building (Philippoi, Butrint) or as an attached hall (Dion). As with the basilica, Rome has offered a standard basic building but most of the cities seem to have followed models of their own design. Rather peculiarly in the case of Philippoi, the *curia* has been identified with one bipartite temple-like prostyle building (25.73 × 13.87 m) that occupied the north-west corner of the forum (Balty 1991, 44–47; Sève and Weber 2012, 66–67). As its twin building in the opposite corner of the forum, the façade consisted of two Corinthian fluted columns (Fig. 9) between *antae* bearing Corinthian capitals (Collart 1937, 336). Perhaps one of the most striking features of the building is the double windows that framed the central door and the large opening over it for ample provision of light and air (Sève 1996, 709). A double low ledge that ran along the walls of the building has been regarded as the base for the seats of the *decuriones*, while a large podium carried statues. With the

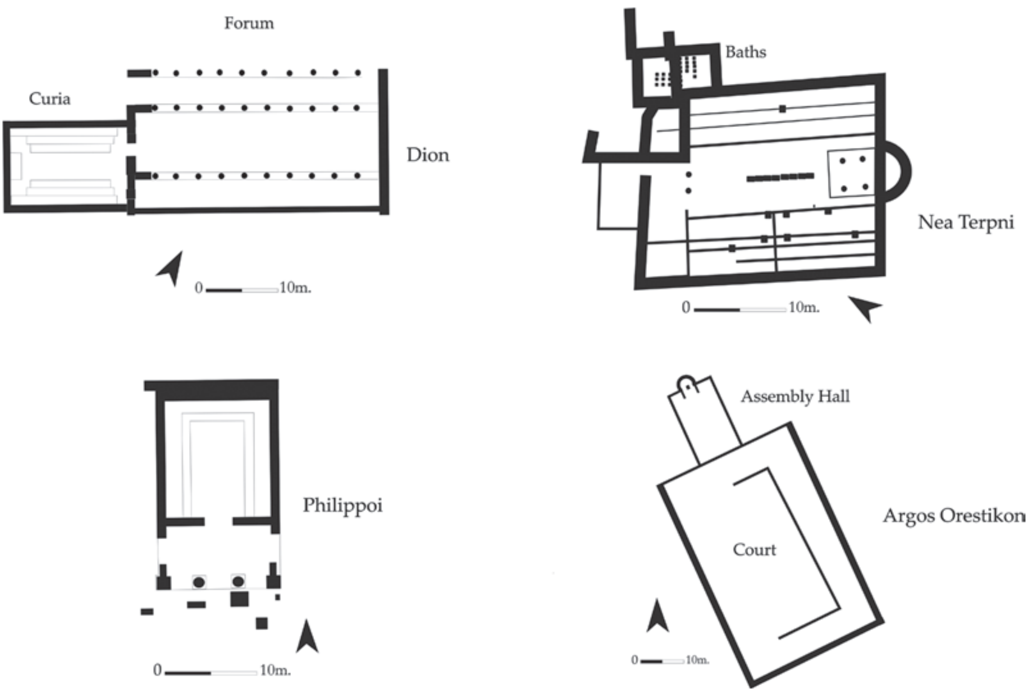

Figure 9. Public buildings: Dion, N. Terpni, Philippoi, Argos Orestikon (digital drawing: author). Dion based on: Christodoulou 2007, 180, fig. 1. Nea Terpni: Karamberi 1994, fig. 190c. Philippoi: Collart 1937, 336. Argos Orestikon: Damaskos & Plantzos 2009, 28, fig. 1.

expensive marble pavement, the revetted with marble imitating pillars walls and its sculptural decoration (akroteria in the form of Nike, see Collart 1937, 336) this was a high-status building, paid by one of the most prominent citizens of Philippoi, the *vir clarissimus* G. Modius Laetus Rufianus (Pilhofer 2009, 254–257, no. 201) responsible for overseeing and financing the project of the forum (Collart 1937, 341–342). In Butrint the *curia* has been identified with a – largely unexcavated – building (10.3 × 12.4 m) that occupied the north-west side of the Forum (Hernandez and Çondi 2008), axial to the basilica (east building), while in Dion (Fig. 9) the *curia* has been identified with a large annex to the basilica (Christodoulou 2000, 61). Three large doors to the south wall of the basilica gave access to this relatively large room (17.11 × 11.3 m) which was decorated with plaster imitating colored veneer (a practice that can be found in other buildings in Dion). Stone bases that were found across the east wall of the building are believed to have carried the wooden benches for the Π shaped cavea.

Compared with the exclusive character of *curiae* and *bouleuteria*, stoas and basilicas, the great covered halls with clerestory lighting that played so large a part in Roman public life reflect a true open access building of public character. Sheltering different administrative, social, juridical or even financial activities (Gros 1996, 235–260) the basilica became one of the archetypical buildings of Roman architecture, one that according to P. Zanker (2000, 35) expresses nothing other than the Roman character (*romanitas*) of a city itself. However, like the Roman podium temple the basilica is regarded to have found its way only occasionally in the Greek world, common only to the Roman colonies like Philippoi, Dion or Butrint. In Philippoi the basilica (Fig. 6) has been identified with a long building (35 × 7.60 m) that occupied part of the west wing of the Forum (Evangelidis 2010, 267), between the *curia* and another building that has been identified with a *tabularium*. Due to its relatively small width the building did not seem to have internal supports and its façade towards the portico consisted of five Corinthian columns *in antis* (which gave it its original name of "chamber with the five columns"). A statue of Fortuna (the base still stands in its original position) decorated the north wall of the building.

In Dion, the civil basilica (Fig. 9) has been identified with a rectangular building (37.5 × 21 m) closing the east part of the square of the Forum and axially placed to the central temple of the west side (Christodoulou 2007). Traces of pillar bases in its interior are indicative of the presence of three aisles, while the west side has been reconstructed in the form of an open colonnade looking at the central court of the forum. This was (by the late 2nd century AD, when the building was constructed) a thoroughly conventional scheme and one that could have been encountered in any of the western provinces. We can see something similar, but much older (end of 1st century BC – beginning of 1st century AD?) in Butrint where the so-called East Building was a rectangular hall (30 × 12 m) oriented westward to face the forum, as evidenced by a large central door that opened in the middle of the wall (Hernandez and Çondi 2008, 289–293). In a second phase (dated to the 3rd or 4th century AD) the northern side was expanded through the construction of an annex and the orientation of the

building changed with the main entrance transferred to the south. Interestingly for the study of early colonial urban spaces, research in the deeper strata under the building has shown that the construction of the basilica belonged to the original design of the forum, a clear sign of an early implementation of Italian-derived architecture. Similar investigations under the forum of Dion have brought to light foundations of Hellenistic buildings that might have belonged to the agora of the pre-Roman city. From one such early Hellenistic building (Christodoulou 2000, 23–36) with monumental dimensions (its façade is reconstructed either as an open 12 column stoa or as a closed wall with eight Doric half columns), which has been identified as a *bouleuterion* or a public gathering hall, come a number of architectural members and a large frieze depicting shields and cuirasses that were incorporated into the external wall of the 2nd-century AD basilica (Christodoulou 2007).

Unique for its appearance in what seems to have been a small town of eastern Macedonia (at Nea Terpni, 2 km north-west of Nigrita), a rather large civil basilica of the 2nd–3rd century AD has been unearthed at the Palaikastro Hill, the possible site of the Bisaltian town of Berge (Karamberi 1994, 607–10). This was a truly (for the standards of a small rural town) monumental three aisled building, of almost 600 m² in extent, which was buried beneath a destruction level (Fig. 9). More unexpectedly the building can be linked with an inscription in Serres Archaeological Museum (Samsaris 1980), which records that the *polis* (the name is not preserved), with a subscription from a certain Julia from the inheritance of her husband Philip, erected the basilica under the supervision of a certain P. Aelius Clarinus Alexandros. Attached to the basilica was a relatively large bath building of the 3rd century AD (see Chapter 11.2). Fragments of monolithic columns in two sizes bearing Ionic and Corinthian capitals were found in the area. Marble floors and fragments of marble veneers and frescoes complete the monumental character of the building. Even if one takes into account the wide distribution of Roman building types by the Middle Imperial period and the relative proximity of the town to the Roman centre of Philippoi, it is still difficult not to be struck by the appearance of such a large, lavish and so characteristically Roman building at the heart of rural Macedonia. It is clear that this small city in the agrarian heartland of the province lacked the metropolitan character of the big cities which would have justified the existence of a large Roman public building. It is, however, also clear that the degree of the influence of Roman material culture in Macedonia and Thrace differed greatly from that of the cities of Achaea, and Roman-type buildings were more common. But I will return to this point in Part III of the book.

The term basilica denotes a columnar building with clerestory lighting and in that sense, this is where the south-east or (according to a more recent name) bent stoa (*portique coudè*) of Thasos belongs. This was a long narrow (96 × 9 m) building which occupied the side of the agora (see Fig. 6) towards the main street of the city (Blondé *et al.* 1995, 693–696; Grandjean and Salviat 2000, 70–71). Both in its planning and detail with the central elevated nave this was an unusual building in which the basilical plan might be Western in derivation (see contra Marc 2001, 505) but the rest of the

architecture of the building like the Doric façade towards the court of the agora and the shops and tabernae occupying the street frontage of the stoa were firmly rooted in Classical and Hellenistic practices. The two aisled building was constructed most probably during the Augustan period (Marc 2001, 505) and it is possible that it had a political and administrative function (Dickenson 2017, 290).

The most obvious distinguishing characteristic of these buildings is nothing more than its distinctive location in the centre of the forum because – architecturally at least – they have many features in common with other large covered halls. In two of these, found near the agora of Maroneia one can observe the same rectangular basilical plan but with a central row of piers in the middle (Kokkotaki 2003, 15). They could have been *horrea* (grain silos) next to the harbour. Apart from location another characteristic feature of these buildings is the monumental (in this case synonymous to lavishness) character of their interior which was intended to be perceptible by the visiting public. The Building with the Arches in Stobi (Санев and Саржоски 1981; Shurbanovska and Jakimovski 2010, 30–45), built sometime around the end of the 1st century AD, provides an impressive example of this kind of interior monumentality (Fig. 10). Here one can observe the same rectangular basilical plan but as an elaborate version with two apsidal halls on the western side framing the main entrance. The interior design with the massive pilasters connected by arches, the presence of a second floor, the use of *opus sectile* with pink and green marble slabs and the lavish

Figure 10. The Building with the Arches in Stobi (source: G. Pavlovski, National Institute Stobi).

decoration with gilded sculptures (among the fresco decorated niches) suggest the impact of a new way to deal with internal space (Pavlovski forthcoming). Within this framework it is not strange that one of the possible identifications of the buildings is that of a library, which seems to have been lavishly decorated regularly with large numbers of statues, portrait busts or both. The rectangular niches between the pilasters could have been designed in order to receive wooden bookcases (*Dig.* 30.41 "*bibliothecae parietibus inhaerentes*") while the twin apsidal buildings (usually one for Greek and one for Latin texts), are also known to be a characteristic feature of other halls that were certainly libraries.

In lack of textual evidence, architectural evidence like recesses in the wall have quite often been the only indicators to identify buildings as libraries or archives of public records. Recesses as such to the lateral walls of the south room in the east wing of the agora of Thessaloniki led to its identification with a public record, a *tabularium* (Adam-Veleni 2001, 28) due to its proximity to the Bouleuterion (see Fig. 6), but there is no evidence that it incorporated a public library. Interestingly, a similar facility the *grammatophylakeion* is known by a Hellenistic inscription (IG X 2.1., no. 50) that was found in the area. In the case of Philippoi, 20 such rectangular recesses (six in the two lateral walls and eight in the rear wall) were found inside a prostyle building (Fig. 6) occupying the south-east corner of the forum (Evangelidis 2010, 268–269). They have been regarded as sheltering wooden shelves for books. Despite the fact that the building was hidden behind the stoa of the forum, it had an elaborate façade with three Corinthian columns between *antae* bearing Corinthian capitals. A series of windows that run along the perimeter of the building at the height of the frieze provided the light and air so necessary in a library. The identification of the building with a library is strengthened by the discovery of the dedicatory inscription which records the dedication in Latin of a *bybliothecae* (the choice of a Greek word for the building is interesting) by a certain G. Oppius Optatus (Sève 1996, 710).

A good example of a building for public gatherings is the large building that has been unearthed at the site Paravela in the area of Orestis in western Macedonia (Damaskos 2006; Damaskos and Plantzos 2009). There, a systematic excavation (Fig. 11) has brought to light a building very interesting in plan (Fig. 9), comprising what seems to be an apsed assembly house (17.5 × 12 m) and a larger, rectangular colonnaded court (52.40 × 33.20 m). Investigations alongside the east section of the courtyard confirmed the existence of a stoa surrounding the court, as presumed by the original excavator of the site, Th. Papazotos in 1991. A series of stone-built pedestals located here may have supported the now lost stylobate of this portico. The interior of the building, which appears basilical in form with an apse and built benches around the walls, was richly decorated; fragments of marble veneer of different types (verde antico, Thasian, Chian and from Prilep in N. Macedonia) were found during the excavation. D. Damaskos, one of the two excavators of the building, identified it with the assembly hall of the Koinon of Oresteians, a confederacy of small towns (like Argos Orestikon and Keletron), villages and communities (like the *politeiai* of Lycaeoi, Oblostaeoi and

Figure 11. The public building in Argos Orestikon (source: D. Damaskos, University of Patras).

Battynaeoi) that were known to have existed in the area since the Late Hellenistic period (Sverkos 2000). Unlike the *curia* of Philippoi or Dion which hosted a restricted number, this was not the meeting place of a few *decuriones* but a large space which provided different spaces for formal gatherings of the *boule* (council) and the larger assembly of people, the *ekklesia tou demou*.

Secure identification of other buildings is more difficult. To cite just one example, the so called "praetorium" (Tasia 1994; Tasia *et al.* 1995) in Thessaloniki (at Plateia Kyprion Agoniston to the west of the agora) presents interpretation problems and the identification with an administrative building is highly speculative. Nonetheless, this was a very large Early Roman building (40 × 50 m) which was founded (end of the 1st century BC) on top of a similarly large Hellenistic building. An earthquake, possibly in the mid-2nd century AD destroyed a large part of the building which luckily remained intact under a thick destruction layer. The central court (12 m north–south × 24 m east–west) paved with hexagonal bricks was surrounded by colonnades on the south, west and north sides, and probably also the east side, which lies under the modern Venizelou Street. Archaeological research during the 1990s revealed much of the south and west wings which had an inner series of rooms opening onto the

colonnades and the central courtyard. In the case of the west wing, an external series of rooms opened to the paved north–south road, 6 m wide which was linked to the courtyard through a corridor that divided the west wing of the building into a north and south section. The excavations brought to light clear indications that there was an upper floor, among them fragments of a fresco of high standard, depicting horses (Tasia 1994, 179–187; Tasia *et al.* 1995, 203–209). The destruction, interestingly, had kept intact the contents in two of the rooms of the west wing; pithoi containing wheat, barley, rye, oats and millet; also broad beans and various weeds commonly found amongst cultivated crops but also sesame seeds in great quantity, and the shells of pine nuts (Mangafa 1995, 209–214).

An interesting example of everyday public architecture is revealed by an inscribed marble slab (initially used as a table) that was found in Dion near the villa of Dionysos, a large urban residence which we will examine later (Pandermalis 2000). The Latin inscription mentions the donation by a certain P. Mestrius Pomponianus Capito (*duumvir* of the city) and Mestria Aquilina (priestess of Athena) of a "*praetorium cum tavemis duabus et apparatura*", a building which D. Pandermalis regards as an official hostel – *mansio* for travelling high officials (see Chapter 4). The donation included not only the construction of the building but also its *apparatura*, its provision with mattresses (*culcitae*), large pillows (*pulvini longae*), beds (*lecti triclinaries*) and stools (*subsellia*). The *praetorium* of the inscription has been identified with a strange bipartite building that has been discovered at a central point of the city exactly opposite the forum and the large public building with the internal twelve-sided court (see Chapter 8). The complex comprised two building units, a larger one occupying the east side of the insula and a smaller one at the west, hosting three rooms destined for storage (pithoi and large quantities of pottery have been found in the rooms). A narrow corridor, which has been interpreted as a *stabulum* (stables) separated the two units. The larger unit, which was, as it seems, destined for accommodation, included large (bed?) rooms opening into a central court of 256 m^2 with a base of an altar or statue in the middle. There are obvious affinities here with the design of *mansiones* or road stations, a tradition which probably owes much to the mobility of Roman officials. An interesting building of the same type and function has been discovered at the site Synaxi, the coast and harbor of ancient Maroneia, where a 2nd-century AD building with two wings of rooms and a broad porch/veranda overlooking the sea was used as a hostel for the pilgrims travelling towards the Sanctuary of the Great Gods in Samothrace (Bakirtzis 1996).

Although we have a considerable number of building plans, these are not always complete and understanding the activities they sheltered is based often on criteria like size and decoration or on general interpretations largely biased by examples from other areas. Imposing buildings with lavish interior decoration have been found during the late 1970s in Beroia, but their precise use (domestic or public) is not clear. One of them (which had at least three building phases) had an elaborate *opus sectile* floor (Allamani 1980). Similar large buildings, which most probably were for public use, have also been

found in different spots in Thessaloniki south of the agora and around the 7th-century AD church of Agia Sophia, an area which seems to have been an important nucleus of the Roman city. One of them, a large building that came to light at Prassakaki street continued its life to Middle Byzantine times, when it was converted into an industrial workshop (Kourkoutidou-Nikolaidou 1980, 382–384). Most of them date to the mid-2nd century AD or even later. Rarer are Late Hellenistic or Early Imperial buildings, like the large building with thick walls, marble paved floors and white plastered walls that has been discovered at a central spot of the ancient city of Potidaia/Kassandreia (Sismanidis 1989, 359–60; Kousoulakou and Missailidou-Despotidou 2006, 503–7), or the two buildings with red plaster that have been discovered behind the east wing of the agora of Thessaloniki (Evangelidis 2010, 114).

For most of the public buildings much of our knowledge depends on texts rather than architecture or fittings that could have indicated specific functions. It is also difficult to identify a distinctive architecture of offices or other public buildings like the prison for instance which is described in the arrest of Paul in Philippoi (*Acts* 16.23–39). The *bema* (Collart 1937, 332–333), orator's platform (conventionally called *Rostra* by the analogy to the same monument in Rome) that dominated the middle of the north side of the public square is indicative for the political function of the Forum as *comitium*, a space where the body of citizens could be gathered. The solid platform (8.70 × 4.35 m) of the *bema* at Philipoi (Fig. 6) was clearly from the early phase of the forum the central feature of the ensemble and it was originally flanked by two religious monuments and later by two large water basins (Sève and Weber 2012, 75, 79). Traces of veneer have been found on its exterior surface, while the traces of two doors (on its sides) indicates that it had some form of superstructure, now lost. It is also clearly linked with another aspect of public space: judicial activity. But the process could have taken place in other buildings like basilicas, where railings and curtains could have created a separate space for hearings.

7.1. A Late Roman administrative and ritual complex: the palace of Galerius in Thessaloniki

It is difficult to write a synthesis of the built environment of Roman Macedonia without reference to the remains of the large palatial complex that Caesar Gaius Galerius Valerius Maximianus built in the sparsely populated eastern part of Thessaloniki in the early 4th century AD, an area, which according to A. Mentzos (2010, 335) could have been used in the Late Republican period as an army camp (a *campus martius*) or exercise field for the city militia. Closely linked with the administration not only of the city of Thessaloniki but also of the eastern regions of the empire, the palatial complex constituted in essence a unique political space for its scale and conception, and for this reason it is examined here along with other public spaces and buildings.

The remains of the complex, most notably the western part of the triumphal arch, the so-called "Kamara" and the large circular cultic building known as the "Rotunda"

continue to dominate the urban landscape of the modern city as important landmarks and meeting points (Fig. 12). The construction of this large *intra muros* administrative, ceremonial, and residential complex was the result of the upgrade of Thessaloniki to an imperial capital by the tetrarch Galerius (AD 293–AD 311) at the beginning of the 4th century AD, an event attested also by the function of an imperial mint in the city (Stefanidou-Tiveriou 2020, 286). We know little about the motives behind the decision of Galerius, a battle-hardened soldier of Balkan descent, to establish his imperial seat in Thessaloniki (which served after all as the provincial capital of Macedonia) but the strategic location of the city along the major land and maritime routes during the Persian campaign may have played a decisive role. We know even less about the execution of his large building programme which must have taken place in a relatively short time between AD 297– 311 (Stefanidou-Tiveriou 2020, 285–6) although evidence from the Octagon (a large reception octagonical hall attached to the palace proper) indicates that work continued after Galerius' death, up to at least the years of Constantine AD 320–325 (Mentzos 2010, 355).

The complex which included official halls, residential quarters, bathing facilities, cultic buildings and a large Hippodrome that occupied an elongated strip of land next to the eastern wall of the city (Fig. 12) was orientated from north to south (the coast). Of the factors that determined the plan the most important was the existence of the east wall of the city and of a large building for spectacles to the west (see Chapter 10). The result was a spectacular composition (especially for someone coming from the harbour and the sea) of successive buildings and monuments with the "Rotunda" looming over them in the north higher lying ground. Although the different parts of the complex (the arch, the round temple and the palace proper) seem to have been built in stages, the overall planning intended to treat the urban landscape in a unified matter. As noted by almost all scholars, the monumental building complex conveyed messages of power drawing on the character of the Tetrarchic system (Stefanidou-Tiveriou 2006; 2020, 303; Spieser 2015).

The main avenue of the city divided the complex in two parts: the main palace (with residential and administrative units) in the south, and the cultic and commemorative complex, containing the arch and the Rotunda in the higher lying north part (Fig. 12). The circular domed building known as "Rotunda" (Mentzos 2001–2002; Nasrallah 2005, 472) reached 29.80 m in height and 24.50 m in diameter (Fig. 13). The 6 m thick walls were constructed with the method that was widely applied in Macedonia of alternating bands of brick and rubble made from local greenish-white stones, with mortar binding. The existence of a peribolos (octagonal according to E. Dyggve and quadrilateral according to G. Velenis) and a colonnaded road connecting the monument with the arch (both appearing often in illustrations of the complex) to the south are according to recent research conjectural (at least for the early 4th-century AD phase; see Mentzos 2001–2002, 58–59). The overall plan and layout of the building is similar to other large circular buildings of the Roman world such as the Pantheon in Rome or the *caldarium* of the Baths of Caracalla. In Rotunda the weight of the dome

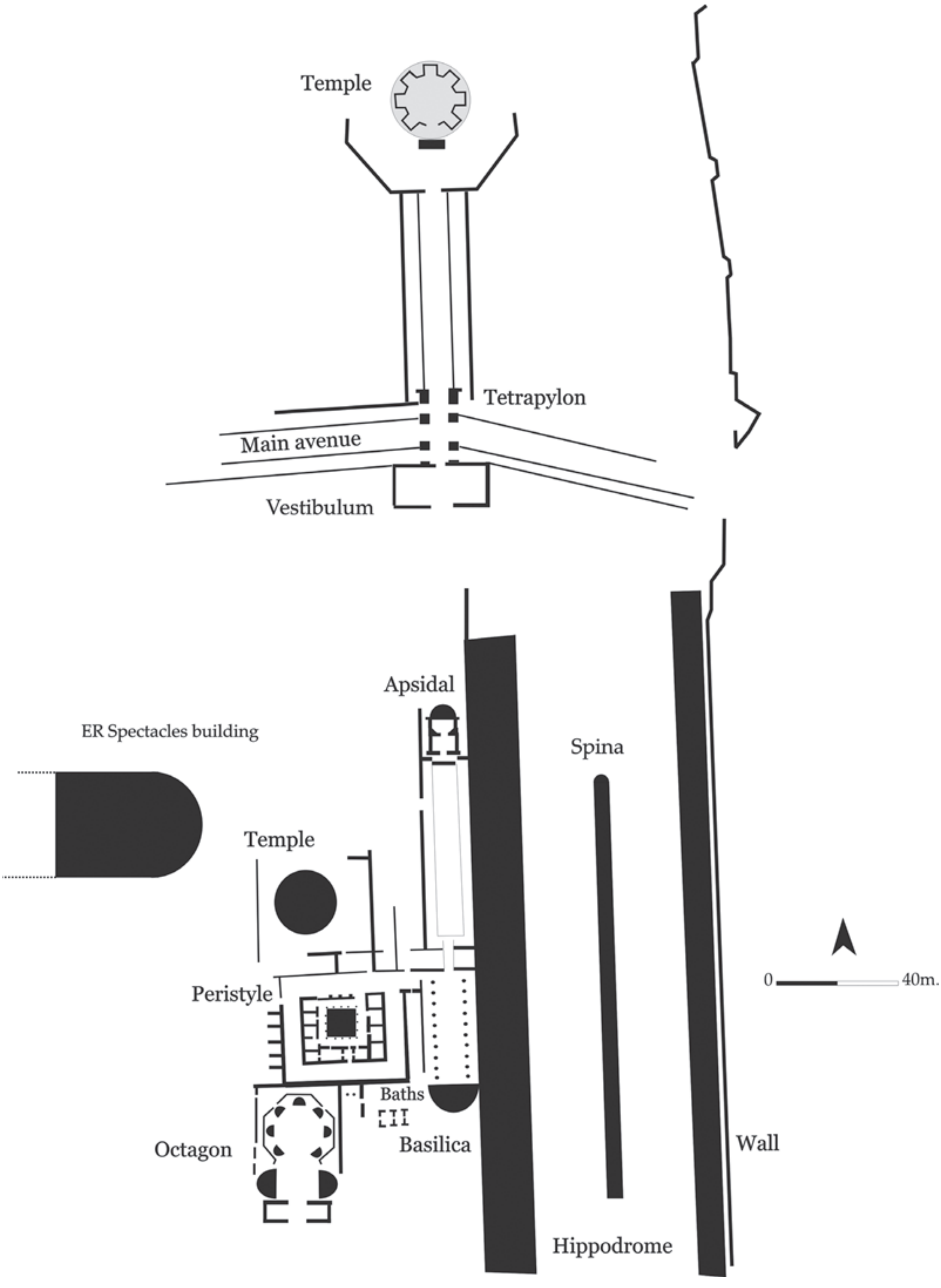

Figure 12. The Galerian complex (digital drawing author). Based on Vitti 1996, pl. 8.

Figure 13. The Galerian tetrapylon (Kamara) and the round temple (Rotunda) in Thessaloniki (photo: author)

was carried by eight radiating recesses on the ground floor and another row of eight – slightly smaller – recesses above them equipped with large windows. The interior was decorated with marble veneer while mosaics covered the barrel-vaulted roofs of the recesses (a series of splendidly executed mosaics on the upper gallery were added during the Early Christian period). Eight decorative *aediculae* opened on the piers separating the recesses of the ground floor. Although the original interpretation of the building as the *mausoleum* of Galerius has largely been rejected (Mentzos 2001–2002, 61 n. 22 about the *mausoleum* of Galerius in Gamzigrad in Serbia), its function remains unknown. Most modern scholars interpret it as a temple dedicated to the patron gods of Tetrachy, Hercules and Zeus, or as the seat of the imperial cult.

The circular temple was part of a broader layout of this part of the city that included also a tetrapylon (Laubscher 1975) straddling the main avenue of the city, known as the Mesi (Middle) Leoforos (Avenue) in Byzantine times. This large and wide colonnaded road (10 m) passed under the main piers of the tetrapylon heading towards the east gate of the city, the Kassandreotiki (the one leading to Kassandreia). Another road, which as we have seen was reconstructed as a colonnaded processional way led to the entrance of Rotunda. From the once bulky and large tetrapylon with the original eight piers only the western part survives today and is conventionally known as the "Arch of Galerius" or "Kamara" (Fig. 13). The original eight piers were arranged in two parallel rows which created three arched openings, of which the central one was wider and higher. The four larger central piers supported a dome covering the centre of the tetrapylon. They were adorned with marble plaques carrying reliefs describing the triumph of Galerius against the Persians in AD 297 and scenes of imperial propaganda. A large rectangular hall that was built not much later than the arch itself with apsidal short sides (known as the *vestibulum*) was attached to the south side of the tetrapylon through a wide brick arch on a pair of pilasters (Mentzos 2001–2002, 63; Stefanidou-Tiveriou 2020, 296). Due to the rise of ground the hall became the basic architectural link between the north ritual complex and the palace proper to the south.

The topography of the palace south of the main decumanus (an area which today is densely built) is less clear but it seems to have consisted of a series of interlocking lavishly decorated halls and residential units (Mentzos 2010). One of them, the so-called Apsidal Hall (today visible in the pedestrian walk of D. Gounari street), was built exactly on the north–south axis aligned with another rectangular building (further to the south) known as the Basilica. The Apsidal Hall consisted of two rooms, a rectangular vestibule (to the south) and a large semicircular hall with two niches on its south side and a raised apse on its north. The lavish decoration of *opus sectile* floors and marble veneered walls and also the existence of underfloor heating (a furnace has been found behind the apse) led to its identification with a *triclinium* or reception hall. On its south side the hall opened to a peristyle courtyard with a mosaic floor and luxurious decoration of mural painting. This courtyard served as the link with another large rectangular building (24 × 67 m) richly decorated with marble revetments, the *Basilica* which ended to a semicircular apse on its south side. Both buildings lay parallel to the west side of the Hippodrome.

What seems to be one of the main residential units of the palace lies west of the "Basilica" and has the layout of a rectangular building 30 × 40 m with 11 rooms organized around three sides of a colonnaded courtyard surrounded by wide corridors paved with mosaic floors (Athanasiou 1998). Doors allowed communication with the "Basilica" to the east and other rooms to the north and south. A marble staircase in the south side of the complex led to another wide corridor which may have led to the main entrance of the palace from the side of the sea. On the east side of the corridor lay a bath complex (Hadjitryphonos 2011, 213–215) and on the west a large octagonal building and its annexes known as the "Octagon" (Karamberi 1990–1996). The latter as is evidenced by its title was a large octagonal hall with a large vestibule with two semicircular niches on its narrow ends. A large peristyle court with width of 47 m and length of 88 m (today under the modern buildings), which might have functioned as the main south entrance to the complex, led through a triple arch (tribelon) to the vestibule and from there to the main octagonal hall. The porticoes, all of them with different widths were adorned with mosaic floors. At the north end of the east portico a horseshoe-shaped niche framed by pilasters supported an elegant marble arch, known as "The Small Arch of Galerius", whose relief decoration includes realistic portraits of Galerius and his wife Valeria (Stefanidou-Tiveriou 1995).

Seven semicircular niches opened at the base of the walls with the north niche (the one opposite the entrance) being larger. The space (29 m in height) was covered by a dome (23 m in diameter), at the base of which two spiral staircases led to an upper-floor gallery. Archaeological evidence indicates that most of the complex was completed after AD 311 and the death of Galerius. The octagonal hall, which has been interpreted as a throne room was not finished until AD 320 during the reign of Constantine. In this phase the building was most probably converted into a church, the north niche was enlarged and the annexes of the Octagon, the vestibule and the southern peristyle were completed.

The last component of the Galerian complex that has been archaeologically identified is the Hippodrome (Vitti 1996, 115–116; Athanasiou *et al.* 2011), a 450 m long and 95 m wide building for spectacles, covering the whole area between the east wall and the palace proper at the west and between the main avenue to the north and the coast to the south. This is the place where in April AD 390, the citizens of Thessaloniki (more than 7000 men, women and children) were massacred by Theodosian imperial troops after an insurrection (Theodoret, *Historia ecclesiastica* V. 17; John Malalas, *Chronographia* XIII, 43)

The link between an imperial palatial complex and a hippodrome, the space where the population of the city could come into visual contact with the emperor, is well known by other palatial examples such as Milan, Antioch and Trier (Ćurčić 1993, 6). Different sections of this large building have been traced along the modern Hippodormiou street such as the imperial box (*kathisma*) which was located in the area between the Apsidal Hall and the Basilica, parts of the seating and the marble veneered podium (their vaulted substructures visible today in the basements of the buildings of the modern city), even the *spina* (the dividing median strip) and the *carceres*, the starting point for the chariots. To the north, the hippodrome was accessible from the main street but there was another entrance in the *sphendone*, the semicircular part at the southern side of the building.

Even though the palace is one of the best documented architectural complexes (for the history of research, see Hadjitryphonos 2011) many aspects of its history and date remain vague (Stefanidou-Tiveriou 2020). Little is known, for instance, about the two circular temples, each of which stood inside its own rectangular enclosure that occupied the space where later the peristyle residential unit of the palace was built. The temples seem to have framed a ceremonial *via colonnata*, one on the north side and the other on the south side. This road started from a gate which was in the western part of the complex and finished in the eastern part where the Basilica and the Hippodrome could be found (Mentzos 2010, 355). Despite the gaps in archaeological knowledge, this was an architecture that reflected the spirit and grand character of the Tetrarchic administration. It is not strange that the overall impression conveyed by the remains is size.

The Galerian palace is perhaps the most iconic administrative and ceremonial palatial complex in Greece. Although to a large extent its architectural language (construction techniques and treatment of architectural members and typology of buildings) is that of the contemporary Roman architecture, the plan and the spatial logic behind its formation leads to a new world with landscapes that rely heavily on the materials and forms of Graeco-Roman architecture but at the same time move away from the typical form of the Graeco-Roman city.

Chapter 8

Buildings for commerce and industry

Commercial space involved a variety of buildings in urban and rural contexts which were used for retail, sale and consumption, even sometimes to finish products (Holleran 2012). Shops arranged in long lines along the streets and workshops but also larger units like peristyle complexes of varying scales were used as places for interaction with the customers. Lower-level retail could have also been carried out in stalls in the streets, in stoas or in open spaces. The ancient sources and a great range of visual representations depict very vividly this world of retail market and the daily life of the Imperial period city. Despite the relative abundance of architectural evidence, it is not always easy to identify specific function of a commercial space or to draw a clear line between different commercial activities (especially the ones that do not leave easily identifiable traces behind). Closed destruction deposits and identification inscriptions are rare.

One of the archaeologically most recognizable categories of commercial buildings is food markets. During the Imperial period, buildings sheltering food markets (generally see De Ruyt 1983), usually referred to by the term "*makellos*" were an important feature of the urban landscape in many cities of Roman Greece (Evangelidis 2019). These, as indicated by epigraphic evidence, were high-status, prestigious buildings, the construction or renovation of which was funded by powerful local patrons who were memorialized in dedicatory inscriptions. In Philippoi, the mid-2nd-century AD *macellum* (Fig. 14) of the colony lies to the south of the forum at a lower level (Evangelidis 2019, 293–294). This identification was made possible by an inscription that was found embedded in the walls of the Early Christian basilica (Basilica B) that later occupied the site (Evangelidis 2019, 313, no.6). The Roman building had an oblong plan (oriented north–south), with the main entrance at the north, facing toward the decumanus that separated the macellum from the south wing of the forum which also had a commercial character since it took the form of a long series of shops. A columnar façade in the Corinthian order allowed entrance to a large rectangular vestibule from which the visitor could pass through smaller openings into the central court. The east and west wings of the building were divided into rectangular spaces that have been identified as shops. Additional architectural details are scant, as most of the building lies under the Early Christian Basilica B. The southern part of the building,

however, seems to have had larger rooms, one of which had a circular structure (or a circular cella) that might have served a cultic function. Deities associated with the *macellum*, such as Fortuna, the Genius of the Macellum and Mercurius Augustus, are mentioned in two fragmentary inscriptions that were found embedded in the walls of the basilica. The cult of Mercurius Augustus as Genius Macelli (Pilhofer 2009, 316–317, no. 251) that is mentioned in an inscription found *in situ* is consistent with similar evidence from North Africa, where axially placed apses like the ones in the *macella* of Thugga and Bulla Regia seem to have housed the cult of Mercury.

In the city of Thasos, a Roman period building (Fig.14) discovered behind the south-east corner of the agora has been identified as a food market, based not only on its typology and location, but also on excavation finds and faunal remains (Evangelidis 2019, 294–295). The building, which has an internal colonnaded court, has the overall shape of a trapezoid. The court (25 x 25 m) was surrounded by pillars of the Ionic order (architectural members have been found *in situ*), and it seems to have united three different complexes of shops or offices. The southern complex was arranged in a triple series of shops and possible storage space. Traces on the plaster of the floor of the court indicated that this was paved, and in its centre there was a well. The market had at least two entrances. The one to the north led through a large passage/room (known as the Ionic propylon) to the court of the main agora, where a 3rd-century BC great altar occupied the south-east corner, placed nearly on the same axis as the

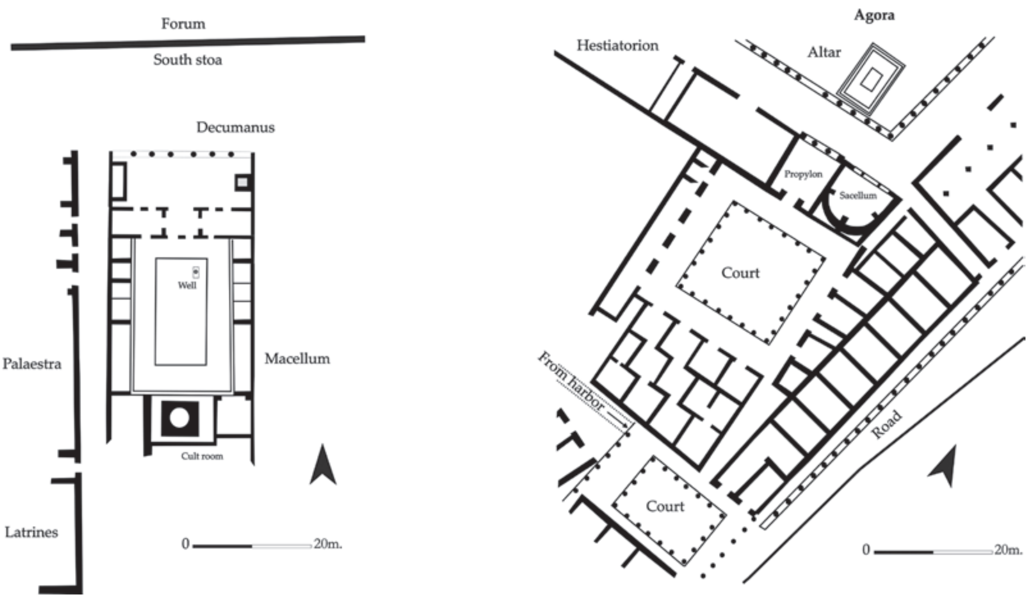

Figure 14. Commercial and food markets in Philippoi and Thasos (digital drawing author). Based on Koukouli-Chrysanthaki and Bakirtzis (1995) Philippoi, Athens, 42, fig. 32 and Marc 2012, 227, fig. 2.

market. The main entrance opened to the south, where a large colonnaded paved court (13.82 × 8.90 m) gave entrance to the market from the great colonnaded road to its east. This entrance also provided access to a smaller road coming from the harbour to the west. The dimensions of the largest of the shops along the market's south-eastern side are 4.7 × 4.7m, and in some of the shops traces of terracotta paving and opus sectile were preserved; one shop contained a raised threshold that was discovered *in situ*. Similar shops were aligned in a long row along the great road that crossed the centre of the city, passing to the east of the agora, an area that seems to have had a strong commercial character. Most of the shops of the food market seem to have been small and rectangular in shape, with a single entrance opening onto the central court. There is no indication of windows in the perimeter walls, though this probably helped to preserve the products. Evidence for the treatment of partition walls or shop interiors is generally scant but for the building in Thasos there was some sort of pavement in the interior of the shops, while the walls were plastered.

The market seems to belong to a larger complex of buildings with a "ceremonial" character as evidenced by the great Hellenistic altar that dominated the corner of the agora, and also by *deipnisteria* (banquet halls), a *hestiatorion* (restaurant) and an imperial cult *sacellum* (temple) in the long stoa that framed the south side of the agora (Fig. 14). The most important feature of the building, however, is the existence of an earlier phase that has been dated by the excavators to the Early Hellenistic period (second half of the 3rd century BC), probably in conjunction with the construction of the great altar in the agora. The discovery of this earlier phase (the plan of which seems to have been followed by the later Roman building) could, according to the excavator of the building, J.Y. Marc, potentially change what we know about the development of the enclosed peristyle commercial market and its place of origin (Marc 2012b, 235–236).

A very interesting building (which is currently under study by the Aristotle University) with an internal twelve-sided polygonal court was unearthed in Dion, in the south-east corner of the insula that lies immediately to the north of the forum (Evangelidis 2019, 295–296). Externally, the building has a square plan covering an overall surface of 1,400 m² (*c*. 35 x 40 m). The central paved court was surrounded by a colonnade that follows the line of the polygonal court. Outside the colonnade, there are four pairs of small rooms of more or less identical dimensions, with other rooms behind them. A square and a semicircular exedra occupy the middle of the west and east sides, respectively. The main entrance is on the south side, opening toward the main *cardo* of the city. From there, one entered the court through a large vestibule, while a similar large apsidal room, paved with marble, occupied the north side of the building. Fragments of a large marble table were found in this room, and the floor was covered with a mosaic with a central panel depicting wrestlers. Based on this evidence, it is possible that the building was a macellum but further research is needed to substantiate this. The plan is very similar to that of the so-called *macellum* in Gerasa, an almost contemporary building of the 2nd century AD that has an octagonal

paved courtyard framed by large semicircular niches (Uscatescu and Martín-Bueno 1997). As in Dion, a large vestibule on the north side of the building was framed by shops and functioned as the main entrance to the court.

It is important to emphasize that, despite the conventional use of terms like "retail food market" or "specialized food market", strict categorization of commercial space may prove in many cases difficult or even unnecessary, since such buildings could have housed various commercial activities. A small peristyle building discovered in Stratoni (ancient Stratonike) in eastern Chalkidike is a case in point (Trakosopoulou and Papastathis 2011). The building, which was located very close to the coast, had the usual plan of a square court surrounded by shops. It also had an incredible life span, surviving from the 1st century BC to the 5th century AD. Most of its interior spaces seem to have functioned as workshops – there was a kiln, pottery, and even a pharmacy – but there is evidence that some spaces also functioned as markets for the selling of grain or other cereals. The "agora" of Stratoni, as it is conventionally called, illustrates well how similar buildings in small cities could have accommodated commercial, artisanal and food-selling activities.

Leaving from the large peristyle complexes let's turn to shops, known as *tabernae* or *ergasteria*, usually single space rooms aligned in rows in the exterior of large public buildings (Trümper 2003; Holleran 2012). Similar one-roomed shops served the retail trade and artisanal activities since the Late Classical period. These were relatively deep, sometimes, as in the case of the south stoa of the agora of Thessaloniki, barrel-vaulted rooms (Boli and Skiadaresis 2001, 90–93), open in the front (see Fig. 7). It is not exactly clear how their front could have been closed but we can imagine the existence of grills, or wooden sliding panels. These could have been used for a variety of activities, not always easily identifiable, from food selling as was probably the case with some of the shops along the central street in Dion (Testekidou 2013) to artisanal activities. Wooden shelves could have been used for storage and in cases a second floor made by light materials could have been used. Trade was most probably done through their open front, which quite often looked into a stoa as in the shops in Dion and across the central street in Edessa (Chrysostomou 2001a). The identification of shops as bars or restaurants is generally based on the presence of masonry retail service counters, large ceramic vessels such as *dolia*, storage containers, animal bones and shells, small drains or water tanks for washing places. These are not always evident and clearly identifiable features have been discovered only rarely .This is the case of the so-called Sebasteion in Kalindoia, where a stone bench and a *kylikeion* along with 14 bronze coins (mostly of the 2nd century AD), numerous iron and bronze artifacts, among them a bronze hook-and-spike for the suspension of a bronze lamp, a bone spoon, many fragments of glass vessels, six parts of identical clay bowls, as well as a clay *skoramis* (chamber pot) have been found in the relatively large (7.50 × 6.50 m) room K (see Fig. 18) of the complex (Sismanidis and Kakamanoudis 2010).

In their final form, some of the 15 rooms of the colonnade along the central street of Dion seem to have sheltered food selling (Testekidou 2013). Recovered artifacts

such as butcher knives (shops VI, VII, VIII, XV), storage vessels in shop VI but also structural features like a masonry bench and a large hearth in shop VI and small hearths/ovens in at least six of them indicate their use as taverns or food selling shops. Most importantly for their identification as taverns and restaurants is their strategic position in the urban framework, located alongside the main thoroughfares of the city and equipped with a latrine (Oulkeroglou 2008, 72–74). Most of these tile-floored shops were relatively small (4.5 × 7 m), decorated with white and red colour accessible by single doorways, that opened into a stoa.

In contrast to retail and commercial space (where our interpretations are based mostly on texts and descriptions), archaeology provides the best evidence for production or industrial activities. These can include large manufacturing areas but also preparation and finishing of raw materials. These are activities that typically took place (for obvious reasons) outside the urban fabric as is characteristically attested in Thessaloniki, where a number of pottery workshops of the Imperial period have been excavated outside the eastern and western walls of the city and interestingly some of them among the graves of the western cemetery (for a detailed survey see Antonaras 2016, 367, n. 4–7. See also Raptis 2011, 176, n. 36). There are also examples of artisanal quarters (glass or metal manufacturing) in central spots where retail was easier as was the large complex of a glass workshop that has been discovered at Vas. Heracleou street in Thessaloniki (Antonaras 2009, 87–90, fig. 3,5) or the Late Roman complex discovered near the Early Christian church of Acheiropoitos (Antonaras 2016, 369–370)

Small workshops functioned in rooms or shops in large public complexes like the agora of Thessaloniki (Valavanidou 2001, 119–130) or in *macella* and other peristyle buildings such as the "agora" of Stratoni. A glass manufacturer's workshop for instance has been identified in one of the rooms (room 57) at the *macellum* of Thasos where numerous fragments of unworked glass, blowing tubes and wasters have been found. Mould fragments, remnants of a furnace and iron slag indicate the existence of a bronze workshop in another shop (Marc *et al.* 2009).

Archaeological traces of artisanal activities have been found in both urban and rural areas and include smithing hearths, kilns and furnaces which are impossible to be all listed here. Some were relatively small such as the Late Roman kiln discovered in Europos (Blackman 1997, 68) with a rectangular firing chamber (2.35 × 2.40 m) and a *praefumium* made of clay and bricks and reinforced by pieces of tile. Similar installations have been discovered at different sites across rural Macedonia, such as the site Kambos near the River Haliakmon where archaeological investigations in the mid-1990s brought to light Imperial period clay ovens/furnaces built over older phases that reached back to the Bronze age (Blackman 2001, 98). Others were larger and belonged to artisanal quarters in the form of a peristyle building such as the building complex (4th to the 1st century BC.) with workshops, kilns and storage-rooms that was excavated in Olympias (Stageira) in Chalkidike (Sismanidis 2000).

The conversion of raw materials into metal objects usually occurred in relatively small workshops in the city. Most of these workshops seem to have functioned in a

confined space, a probable indication that they were covering production on demand or small-scale manufacturing. However, there are also cases of state-controlled manufacture, as in the case of weaponry. A Late Roman *fabrica* (Souris 1995) is mentioned in the *Notitia Dignitatum* (the official register of all the offices in Late Empire) for Thessaloniki, linked probably to the presence of Galerius. Its existence has been confirmed by the discovery of a sarcophagus of a *fabricensius*, an imperial clerk responsible for the function of this state-owned enterprise (Souris 1995, 69).

Chapter 9

The architecture of ritual space: temples and sanctuaries

The previous chapters highlighted the developments in the centre of the city, the heart of public affairs and trade. This chapter takes the theme of change and adaptation to the field of ritual space, the world of temples, sanctuaries and shrines. In one of the most graphically presented episodes of the Greek novel *Lucius or Ass* (MacLeod 1967), the magically transformed into an ass Lucius travels through Roman Macedonia with a group of priests of the Syrian goddess (Pseudo Lucian, 35–41). The group carrying the statue of the goddess from village to village and from one small town to another counted on the generosity and piety of the villagers. In every village they stopped, they exhibited the statue (which found its place as *synnaos* – host – in the local temple), they flagellated themselves publicly as a sign of their humility and religious purity, and at the same time engaged in immoral practices privately. The passage on the Syrian priests draws a very eloquent picture of polytheism in Imperial times. The world we are looking at, the small towns and villages of Macedonia that the group passes through, is a world which although deeply rooted in traditional religious and ritual practices is also open to new exotic, esoteric, mystic and even sometimes charlatan cults (Chrysostomou 1989). In the increasingly interconnected Roman world, cult, religion and ritual played a catalytic role in processes of redefining one's place in the new order (Chaniotis 2009; Stek 2009). As shown by W. Van Andringa (2007), the process of incorporating local communities into a larger empire led to a religious transformation, not simply as hybridity–syncretism, but rather as a new religious language which allowed local communities to place themselves in a new global context.

Temples and sanctuaries were from very early on an integral part of religion in the area of Macedonia (Schmidt-Dounas 2007; Christensen and Murray 2010; Mari 2011). The rich archaeological discoveries and the testimonies of the literary sources along with epigraphical finds speak about the catalytic dominance of the Greek ritual milieu in the formation of the religious landscape of the core of the old kingdom (Hatzopoulos 1994, 87). As with their language and culture, the religious practices of the Macedonians were essentially Greek with some distinctive local characteristics such as the active role of the king in the rituals and the early presence of the ruler

cult (Mari 2011, 458). Most of the major gods and goddesses of the Greek pantheon remained familiar throughout antiquity, with some of the cults like that of *Zeus Olympios, Athena Alkidemos, Heracles Kynagidas* and *Dionysos Erikryptos* and *Pseudano*r holding a special importance in the formation of a pan-Macedonian identity (Mari 2011, 455). During the Hellenistic period eastern cults with their distinctive esoteric character also had a considerable appeal in the area. However, the wide geographical area of the old kingdom which encompassed many different regions, the variety of people living within it, the close connections with the Thracian world as well as (through the campaigns of Alexander) with the Near East contributed to an amazingly complex religious landscape and a multitude of religious practices. Within this environment underlying non-Greek and Thracian beliefs came to coexist with Greek religious practices. It is striking that – with the exception of some Greek coastal cities and a few sites in the old core of the kingdom (Schmidt-Dounas 2007) – monumental religious architecture is lacking, since even in the royal centres the temples were small and relatively unelaborate. P. Christensen and S. Murray (2010, 437) tried to explain it as a result of the structure of the kingdom which focused primarily on civic architecture or in funerary monuments while alternative explanations saw influence from the Near East and Persia (to which Macedonia belonged in the Early Classical period). Whatever the reasons, it is clear that, in contrast to southern Greece, truly monumental temples were generally missing from the urban and rural landscape.

Religious buildings or sites not only underwent physical changes over time but their meanings varied according to the events and the changing sociocultural contexts in which people experienced them. For example, religious sites like the sanctuary of Olympios Zeus in Dion (Pandermalis 1997, 29–30; Falezza 2012, 43–53) that recalled the old kingdom would no longer have been welcome in the new regime and we can imagine that links to this past might have snapped in the early years after the conquest possibly due to central intervention. Other famous sites such as the sanctuary of Poseidon in Mendi (Vokotopoulou 1994) seem also to end during the Late Hellenistic–Early Roman period.

In many sites a great part of ritual life continued to be carried out in long-standing temples and sanctuaries, such as the sanctuary of Demeter in Dion, the early phases of which go back to the Archaic period (Pingiatoglou 2010, 207; 2015). Many of them, like the sanctuary of Asklepios in Morrylos (Falezza 2012, 112), are known mostly from textual and epigraphic evidence, a fact that, even without architectural evidence, confirms their existence during the Imperial period (Fig. 15). Rarer are cases where archaeology has provided evidence, even fragmentary – as in the case of the temple of Artemis Gazoria in Skydra (Chrysostomou 1998) – for their continuous function until Late Antiquity. One such well-studied case is the temple of Ammon Zeus at Aphytis in Pallene. Like many of the great temples of antiquity, Ammon Zeus was a building with an amazing longevity (Tsigarida 2011). The temple (10.51 x 21.43 m), a peristyle building with six columns on its narrow side and 11 on its long side with a pronaos and a cella was most probably built in the second half of the 4th century BC on the

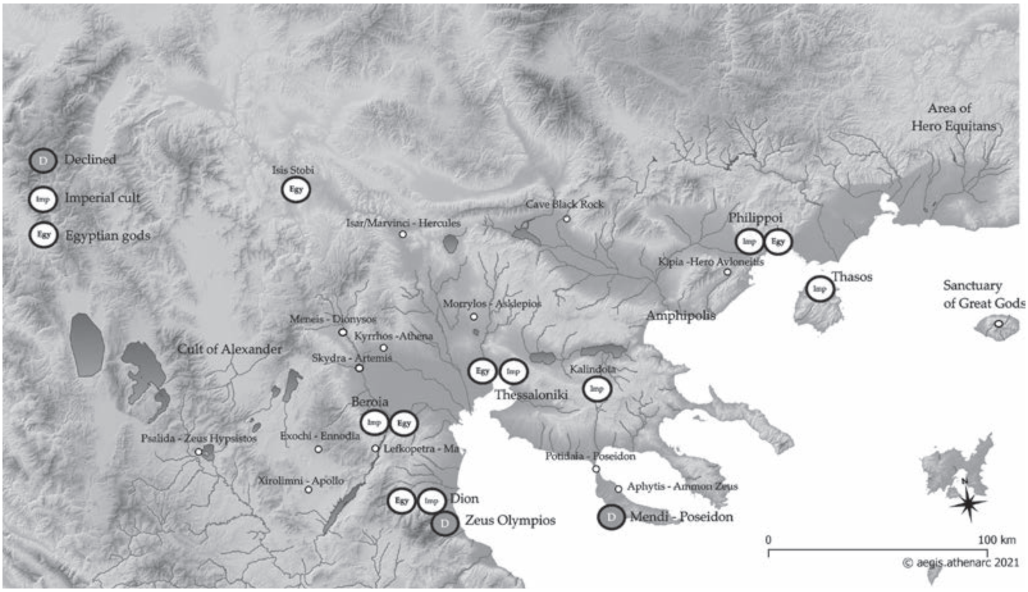

Figure 15. Sanctuaries and temples mentioned in the text (digital map author).

initiative of a Macedonian king, Alexander or Cassander. The temple monumentalized a sancturary that might have existed from the late 5th century BC in which Ammon Zeus, Dionysos (Xenophon in *Hellenica* V, 3, 19 calls it "the sanctuary of Dionysos at Aphytis") and Asklepios were worshipped in an idyllic landscape with waterfalls and springs. During the 2nd century AD, the sanctuary was reorganized with two oblong parallel buildings added in front of the temple to accommodate the spectators who watched the rituals that took place there. The temple itself might have also changed form, since many of its Doric capitals from the pteron were found incorporated with other Doric and Ionic architectural members from various Classical or Early Hellenistic edifices to the walls of the two Roman buildings. Water played an essential role in the cult of Zeus Ammon and from very early on a water supply system brought water to the temple. About the middle of the 2nd century AD a bath (which might relate to the cult of Asklepios) with all the rooms, *frigidarium, tepidarium* and *caldarium,* arranged on the north–south axis was added to the complex (Tsigarida 2011, 180–181).

The temple of Ammon Zeus, as other similar buildings like the temple of Athena in Kyrrhos or Artemis Gazoria in Skydra, was a three-and-a-half-century old building and, even with the changes in plan, it conveyed an impression of continuity. The study of the architectural members shows a resemblance of its capitals to those of the temple of Athena Alea in Tegea and its stone entablature, and marble tiles, with those of the South Stoa in Corinth. The impact of such imposing classical architecture can well be imagined. It is logical to ask to what extent this quintessential classical architectural form played a role in its reception as important markers of antiquity.

To such questions a very interesting building that has been discovered (then buried and rediscovered in 2000) in Thessaloniki can offer a partial answer. During the Early Imperial period in the western sector of the city a large Ionic temple of the Early Classical period (Tasia *et al.* 2000, 227–246) was reconstructed with the addition of new material (Stefanidou-Tiveriou 2012). The building was a large (width 16.80 m – surviving length 13.35 m) peripteral six column temple with a pronaos based on a six step krepis (Fig. 16). The foundation, made from rubble and mortar, dates the building to the Roman period, while several architectural fragments bear characteristic mason marks, indicating that the superstructure was reassembled by material coming from more than one Early Classical building that were probably lying in the immediate area. The old members were adjusted *in situ* to fit to the building, while at the same time new material imitating the old was added. The exact date of the building remains elusive. Th. Stefanidou-Tiveriou (2012) in her study about the new sculptural finds from the 2000 excavation argued that the building might have been built at the time of Hadrian when Thessaloniki became a member of the recently founded Panhelleneion. As with the case of the itinerant temples at Athens, the motivation behind the creation of this architectural patchwork is clear: the reference to an idealized past and the enhancement of the mnemonic dynamic of the landscape (Evangelidis 2018,

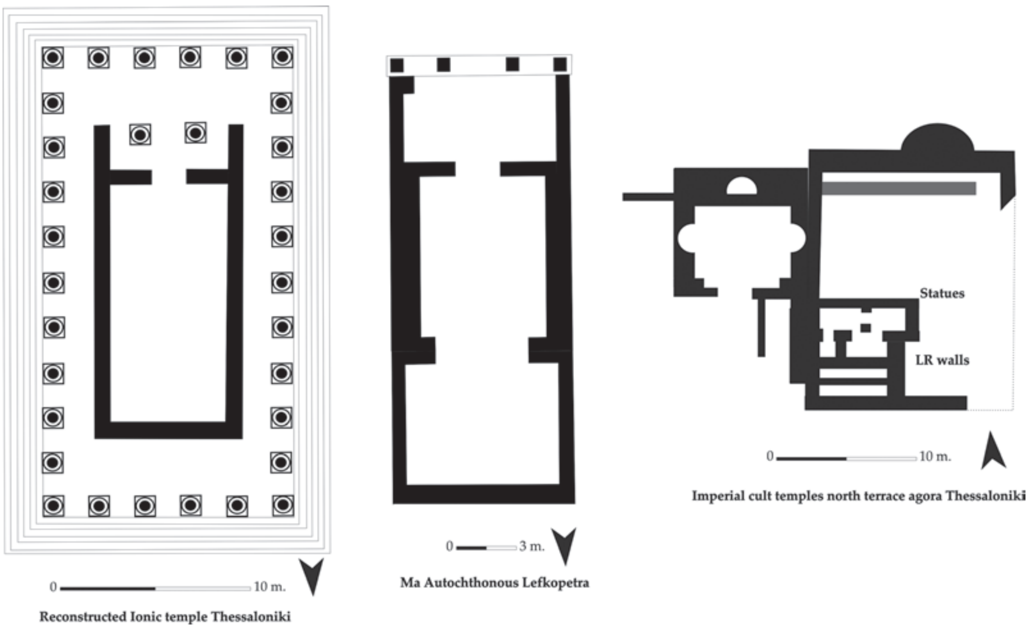

Figure 16. The Ionic temple in Thessaloniki, the temple of Ma Autochthonous in Lefkopetra and the imperial cult temples in the north terrace of the agora of Thessaloniki (digital drawing author). Ionic temple based on: Tasia 2000, 233, fig. 2. Lefkopetra: Karadedos 2007, 117, fig. 3. North terrace: Stefanidou-Tiveriou 2020, 74, 2.3.

424). This probably had a special significance for Thessaloniki, an Early Hellenistic foundation, where the physical traces and monuments of Classical architecture were few. If this interpretation of the temple is correct, then the building is an illustrative example of the classicizing spirit of the period, not very dissimilar to what has been observed in Athens (Alcock 2002, 54–58). Besides such eclectic manifestations the architecture (in proportions, details and plan) of most of the temples was by its very nature conceived and executed within the basic framework of Classical and Hellenistic temple building tradition. The temple of "Poseidon" in Potidaia dating to the Imperial period, an elongated building partly submerged in the sea adorned with nets and hooks (Kousoulakou 2000, 326–327), which was found originally in 1928 and then rediscovered in 2000 in the western coast of modern day Nea Potidaia, is such a characteristic example.

In certain cases, however, we can also detect typically Italian features, such as the use of a tall podium and a frontal flight of steps. A good example of such a Roman-style podium temple has been found on a very important site in the village of Isar-Marvinci in North Macedonia; this may be identified either as the ancient city of Doberos or Eidomene, both important urban centres in the Upper Axios basin. Inscriptions from the area attest to the presence of Roman citizens from very early on. One such Roman citizen of the city, a certain M. Tettios Rufus, member of the praetorian guard dedicated – according to an inscription engraved on an architectural member – a temple to Hercules sometime around AD 79. This original building (the plan and architectural form of which we ignore) was destroyed and then replaced in AD 181 by a podium temple with six steps, tetrastyle and prostyle possibly of the Ionic order (Sokolovska 2015, 64–67). This is the typical frontal temple of Italy, prostyle and standing on a podium. The temple was donated by an important figure of the city, an unnamed *makedoniarchos* (an official of the Macedonian Koinon) who also paid for the decoration (Јосифовска-Драгојевиќ 1965). Fragments of a large marble statue that were found inside the temple indicate the cult of Hercules which during the Severan period might have been assimilated with the cult of Commodus.

Although by the time that the temple was built in the late 2nd century AD the distinction between Roman and Greek architecture became increasingly blurred, the emphasis on the façade and axial placement is a feature that in many ways reflects a very Roman spatial logic and certain architectural aesthetic, which was more evident in the new cities of the period or the colonies where the impact of Italy was stronger and more direct than the rest of the cities of the province. In the Roman colony of Philippoi, for instance, three centrally placed Corinthian temples, accessed by monumental staircases from the decumanus maximus as well as a small temple building which has been characterized as a heroon dominated a terrace that loomed over the forum (Sève and Weber 1986). Their reconstruction is based mostly on architectural members that were found embedded in a large basilica (Basilica A) that occupied the site during Late Antiquity. Stylistically, they seem to date to the mid-2nd century AD as the rest of the forum. The three temples placed side by side have been identified

with the Capitolium of the colony, the symbol of the Roman state religion, which only in rare cases found its way to the east, mostly in Roman colonies. Since in most of the cases – except Corinth – the evidence for the early stages of the colonies in Greece is fragmentary, we cannot be certain how soon after the foundation of the colony the settlers started to build Roman-style buildings. The overall evidence from the forum indicates that this might have happened relatively early, in the period of the Julio-Claudians, but the conditions seem to differ from site to site (Sève and Weber 2012, 12–17).

The Classical-inspired temples were of course only one aspect of the religious architecture of the period. In other cases, the development of new religious architecture is closely linked to the development of the cults themselves. For instance, the great weather god of Macedonia Zeus Hypsistos (Chrysostomou 1989-1991; Mitchell 1999) acquired during this period an increasing popularity as a god assimilated to Jupiter Optimus. Mountain sanctuaries of the god during Hellenistic and Roman times, with statuettes, votive reliefs and stelae, often inscribed with depictions of eagles and Zeus Hypsistos in the iconographical type of Zeus wearing a himation and holding a sceptre, were located at various sites in Upper Macedonia, especially in the area of Elimeia and Orestis (Chatzinikolaou 2010, 193–222; 2011).

One of the new sanctuaries dedicated to Zeus Hypsistos during the period has been found at the Roman colony of Dion (Pandermalis 2003, 417–424). The sanctuary lies by the banks of the River Vaphyras very close (300 m) to the temple of Zeus Olympios. It consisted of a precinct/temenos dominated by an altar (2.50 × 3 m) and a relatively small temple with a *pteron* (external colonnade) on its three sides. The surviving main temple (Falezza 2012, 52–55) itself is nothing more than a single room cella with a threshold that bears evidence for the existence of double doors. Cella and pteron were paved with mosaics depicting ornamental geometric motifs, a white bull, double-edged sacrificial axes and a pair of ravens. Inside the cella a marble statue of Zeus which presents the god sitting on a throne holding a sceptre in his raised left hand and a thunderbolt in his right was found. Along with it, the excavation brought to light a marble eagle with outstretched wings and head turned towards the god and four different inscriptions mentioning dedications of building and statues to the god, who in one case is identified as Jupiter Optimus Maximus. The donors were all important local notables, like a certain *tabularius* Heracleon. Two more marble inscriptions that were found incorporated in a statue base outside the cella mention the names of the people responsible for the temple (dated to AD 251/252), while the second contains the list of worshippers and refers to land belonging to the sanctuary. A monolithic base inserted into the ground with an iron ring on its upper side, similar to those found in front of the altar of Zeus Olympios and a water basin with a stone-built drainage channel are probably linked to the rituals taking place in the area of the altar. Various architectural features, some of them decorated with eagles in high relief, several marble inscriptions, sacrificial vessels and a *bucranium* were found. The temenos was probably surrounded by stoai, which at least on the western

and northern sides included a series of rooms that served cultic purposes. Entrance to the temenos was possible through a sacred way, lined with columns crowned by marble eagles.

After the campaign of Alexander and the return of thousands of veterans from the East, eastern cults had a considerable appeal in the area. Within the cosmopolitan framework of the Hellenistic period all the hub cities like Thessaloniki and Beroia offered receptive ground for the esoteric strongly organized oriental cults, which were present in the religious landscape of these cities from an early date. It is, however, only during the Imperial period that many of these sanctuaries experienced architectural monumentalization. One of these was the important sanctuary of the Egyptian gods (or Serapeion) in Thessaloniki (Falezza 2012, 130–143) which remained a focal point of the city's religious life on into Roman times. Discovered in 1917 in the western part of modern Thessaloniki, in an area which can be characterized as the religious sector of the ancient city, the sanctuary of Sarapis or the sanctuary of the Egyptian gods (Steimle 2002) had a continuous life from the 3rd century BC to Late Antiquity (Voutiras 2005). The complex was only partially excavated in the years before the Second World War and then buried underneath modern construction during the post-war building frenzy. In lack of a full excavation report, we rely on scattered evidence and excavation notes. The original structure seems (based on epigraphic testimony) to date to the 3rd century BC thus making the Sarapis sanctuary one of the earlier buildings of the city (Christodoulou 2021). The sanctuary seems to have consisted of a small Hellenistic temple, a portico (or porticoes), altars and a rectangular crypt (1.60 × 4 m) with a tunnel (more than 10 m) where statues, votive reliefs and more than 70 inscriptions were found, which attest to groups or associations of various kinds, including businessmen, sacred object bearers and initiates of *Zeus Dionysos Gongylos*. During the Imperial period a podium temple (8 × 11 m) with a vestibule, *sekos* and a semicircular apse on its north side was built exactly over the crypt. Other buildings of the Roman period, among them a stoa (with a rectangular foundation of an altar or statue base) and a temple like building were unearthed to the north of the complex [*BCH* 45 (1921), 540–541]. The sanctuary could have been more extensive since a number of inscriptions refer to buildings that have not been archaeologically identified: a temple of Isis (Nigdelis 2005, 26) with altars (IG X II.1, 97) and sacred ways – *dromoi* (IG X II.1, 118 and IG X II.1, 111), an altar to Osiris (IG X II.1, 110) and an Osireion with a peristyle and a building called *didymaphorion* (IG X.II, 1, 109; see overview of the evidence in Christodoulou 2021, 467).

In contrast to the now lost sanctuary of Thessaloniki, the sanctuary of one of the most influential Egyptian deities, that of Isis Locheia in Dion (Pingiatoglou 2010, 189), offers a relatively clear picture of the fittings appropriate to the cult. As in Thessaloniki, the sanctuary of Isis Locheia (the protector of childbirth and nourishment) in Dion was also reorganized and attained a more monumental form during the late 2nd or early 3rd century AD (Pingiatoglou 2010, 179–192). The sanctuary, today one of the major sights of attraction in the archaeological park of Dion, was built on a

Figure 17. The temple of Isis in Dion (photo: author).

site outside the south-eastern corner of the city walls, on the banks of the River Vaphyras, just east of the temenos of Zeus Hypsistos. During the Hellenistic period (3rd–2nd century BC) the increasingly more appealing cult of Isis seems to have replaced an older Late Classical cult of *Artemis Eileithyeia* which occupied the same site and is known only by sculptural and textual evidence (Pingiatoglou 2010, 191). As the neighboring sanctuary of Zeus Hypsistos, this was an enclosed rectangular forecourt with four temples placed against the rear wall of the sanctuary. The main temple, the one dedicated to Isis Locheia was centrally located, axially to the entrance and was approached by a sacral processional way framed by colonnades. This was a prostyle podium temple of the Ionic order with pronaos and cella. A smaller temple with a niche that stood to the north has been securely attributed (by sculptural and epigraphical evidence) to the cult of *Aphrodite Hypolimpidia* (The Aphrodite at the foot of Mt. Olympus). This is a very elegant temple the floor of which is occupied by a tank which was constantly filled with water in which someone could see the reflection of the statue of the goddess that stood in the niche. Another small temple dedicated to Aphrodite stood to the south, next to the larger temple of *Isis Tycheia* (Isis Fortuna) which was built over a natural spring that was later revetted with marble (Fig. 17). Rooms to the north and south wings of the temenos were probably used for the accommodation of worshippers or offices for the administration of the sanctuary since in one of them three large bases of statues with the names of the female dedicators were found.

The temple of Isis Locheia (fragments of the statue of the goddess were found in the interior) that was discovered in 2008 in the lowest terrace of the ancient city of Stobi follows the typical Roman podium temple style (Blaževska and Radnjanski 2015). The temple (16.10 m long and 8 m wide), which, similar to the example from Thessaloniki, contained two underground chambers, was oriented north-east–south-west and seems to belong to a larger precinct/temenos. As in Dion, the central shrine in Stobi is set within a courtyard around which different buildings opened. From its architecture only the podium (of 2.40 m height), the underground chambers and the first two rows of the stairs of the façade survive. Its exact architectural type remains unknown although the excavators propose that it was either distyle in antis or tetrastyle prostylos. Architectural members that were discovered scattered around the temple or reused in a Late Roman house that occupied the area indicate extensive use of pink and grayish-white marble but also of local stones. The original 2nd-century AD structure seems to have suffered extensive damage during an earthquake of the early 4th century AD which caused damage to other public buildings of the city like the theatre and the Building with the Arches. A careful examination of the different marble fragments of entablature, pediment, architrave, frieze, cornice and sima that were found scattered around the temple, part of a column and one Roman period Ionic base indicate that they do not belong to one building (they seem to correspond to three different façades) and the complex might have contained more than one religious building with classicizing features. The two underground vaulted chambers (3.10m in height) were built in the podium under the cella and the pronaos. Their main entrance 0.90 m wide, was on the back of the podium, flanked by doorposts and with a small flight of stairs leading down to the first chamber which measures 5.80 × 4.80 m. In front of the temple, there was a large marble altar (2.65 × 2.30 m), two marble pedestals for sculptures or dedicatory inscriptions and two ritual pits on the back (in front of the entrance of the underground chamber) built of bricks and lime mortar which contained a large quantity of ash and animal bones. If the sanctuary of Isis in Dion and Stobi provides us a picture of a well-organized sanctuary of these eastern cults in Macedonia, the "Sanctuary of the Egyptian gods" in Philippoi is an illustrative example of a ritual space with no permanent architecture. Instead, votive stelai, altars and statue bases clustered together in the steep area between the Basilica A and the akropolis, a place where important rock paintings have also been found (Tsochos 2002).

But it was not only the eastern oriental cults (for evidence in Amphipolis see Samartzidou-Orkopoulou 2011) that were upgraded with new architecture – sanctuaries and temples – during this period. Various ritual sites associated with fertility and manumissions were also promoted in Roman times. One of the most important sanctuaries in Macedonia, that of Mother (Ma) Autochthonous is located on the slopes of Mt. Bermion (at the site Lefkopetra very close to Beroia) along an old pastoralist's track overlooking the valley of the River Haliakmon (Falezza 2012, 31–37). The temple at Lefkopetra was undisturbed when it was discovered in the early 1960s by

Ph. Petsas (1966) and excavations there produced valuable evidence about the nature of a rural shrine where worshippers attended manumissions of slaves. The picture is of a thriving religious site until its decline in the 4th century AD, whose reliance on the act of manumission permeated all aspects of its function. The name of the deity (*Μήτηρ Θεῶν Ἀυτόχθων*) is probably reflecting a pre-Hellenic native deity cult of the highlands. Very close to the site (700 m) excavations during the early 2000s brought to light an extensive complex of buildings dedicated to the cult of the Great Mother from the 4th century BC (or even before that) until the 2nd–1st century BC (Stefani 2002). Based on finds (clay tablets) the excavators believe that the original phase of the sanctuary of Mother Autochthonous had the form of an open-air sanctuary organized around an altar with the temple added in a later phase (around AD 171–174). Textual evidence indicates the link with an important annual festival which was celebrated in the second half of the month Dios (October) and the existence of a priest (mostly women) and administrative (mostly male) staff that was drawn from elite families of Beroia. The temple itself (20 × 9.25 m) was a prostyle (tetrastyle) building with pronaos, cella and opisthodomos (which was identified during the 2000 campaign). The temple (Fig. 16) is made of local stone with extensive use of marble in the stylobate, the columns, the pediment, the epistyle, the entrance threshold and the offering tables (Karadedos 2007). More than 190 inscriptions (mostly of manumissions) of the Middle Roman period (between AD 141/142 and 313) cover literally the whole exterior surface of the building (architrave, the columns and the cornices). More were probably kept in the archives of the sanctuary (Petsas *et al.* 2000). Manumission seems to have been practiced in other similar semi rural sanctuaries in the area, dedicated to pre-Hellenic mother deities with the nature of *kourotrophos* (*Demeter, Artemis Agrotera, Artemis Eileithyeia, Syria Parthenos* and *Dionysus Agrios, Erikryptos,* and *Pseudanor*), since the liberation was probably metaphorically equated with birth or the passage from childhood to adulthood. The relationship between ritual and transition or between ritual and social role had, as shown by M. Hatzopoulos (1994, 65–79), a special importance in Macedonia and these "*rites of passage*" seem to have survived more than in any other region of the Greek peninsula.

One ritual site with wide appeal is the site discovered at Exochi in Eordaia, near the western foot of Mt. Bermion where a large number of architectural members, inscribed votive reliefs, and coins and marble inscribed censers have been collected since 1959 (Chatzinikolaou 2010, 210). The material remains, especially the architectural members, led to the conclusion that a small temple was built during the Imperial period which as the rest of the sanctuary was destroyed during Late Antiquity. The deity that was worshipped at Exochi was Ennodia, a fertility–mother type goddess which came to the area (probably through Thessaly) during the late Hellenistic period or before (Mari 2011, 461). The votive offerings and a series of marble reliefs (today in the Archaeological Museum of Kozani) depict a common iconographical type of Enodia from the late 2nd to the third quarter of the 3rd century AD, with the goddess sitting sideways on a horse, holding a short torch and with a dog accompanying her.

The goddess was strongly linked with manumissions and acts of liberation of slaves have been traced on architectural members of the sanctuary at Exochi. Ennodia was probably worshipped along with Zeus Meilichios, as attested by the statuette of Zeus Meilichios and a coiled snake, but also with the Syrian Goddess since two marble votive reliefs of the 2nd and 3rd centuries AD have been found at the site. An inscription found in a marble ritual table of the 3rd century AD speaks about a sanctuary curator (ἐπιμελητοῦ *περί τῶν ἱερῶν*), probably at the conclusion of his service (Chatzinikolaou 2010, 213–214).

If sanctuaries like Lefkopetra and Exochi suggest the monumentalization of pre-existing ritual sites and a sense of continuity, the introduction of the imperial cult in the religious landscape shows very eloquently the acknowledgment of the political superiority of Rome. The imperial cult with its very vivid public and collective character shaped to a large extent the social world of the Imperial period (Price 1984). There is ever-increasing evidence that the centrality of the cult (often accompanied by the cult of the goddess Roma or integrated with the cult of other gods) in the public and private religious life of the province was established from very early on, since in many ways it was an extension of the Hellenistic period ruler cult (Daubner 2016). An inscription from Kalindoia (SEG 58.578) refers to the cult already from the year 27 BC and a second inscription (SEG 35.744) from the same city includes a whole range of activities from sacred communal meals to contests, prayers and sacrifices (Daubner 2016, 404–406). The importance of the cult is obvious not only by the abundant epigraphic evidence but also by the relatively rich archaeological evidence which has revealed buildings or complexes dominating the heart of the civic life, the agora and its surroundings. Textual, numismatic and archaeological evidence indicate that almost every major city must have had one or more places for the imperial cult which were the focus of religious, ceremonial, athletic or legal functions. The architectural language was extremely diverse and encompassed different types from free-standing separate buildings to small *aediculae* or rooms annexed to larger public buildings (Evangelidis 2008).

Beroia, had already from the time of Nerva (Burrell 2004, 191) gained the right to become the seat of the Koinon of Macedonians (the provincial assembly responsible for the cult in provincial level) and to raise a temple that served the cult in a provincial level. Twin tetrastyle temples with a column between them bearing a statue on top are depicted on the 3rd-century AD coins of the city but whether this reflects a real complex or is simply a motif (similar to one from Pergamon and Nicomedia) remains unknown. Borcas-Deflassieux (1999, 82) in her synthetic study of the archaeology of the city favours the identification of the temple with architectural remains that have been discovered along the modern Mitropoleos street, an important avenue of the Roman city which had the form of a colonnaded street (Evangelidis 2020a, 306). Fragments of large column drums, Doric capitals, stone walls and floors made by black and white slabs indicate the existence of a large temple in the area.

Rich epigraphical, archaeological and sculptural evidence from Thessaloniki (Steimle 2008; Stefanidou-Tiveriou 2009b) attests the dominance of the cult in the life of the city, which gained though the official title of *neokoros* quite late in its history, in the mid-3rd century AD (Burrell 2004, 198–204). Nevertheless, a temple dedicated to Julius Caesar and Augustus, a work by a certain architect Dionysius is known by epigraphical evidence to have existed in the city already from the Augustan period (Nigdelis 2005, 24). The inscription was found embedded in the eastern wall of the city but, despite the different locations proposed, the exact site of the building remains unknown. It must have been an important building in the fabric of the city, in the construction of which the local council was involved, since one of the local notables was acting as the foreman of the project. A group of high-quality imperial statues that have been found in the western part of the city are indicative of another site of the imperial cult. The statues have been found in the vicinity of a brick-built semicircular hall at the western part of the city, now covered by modern buildings. As noted by T. Stefanidou-Tiveriou (2009b, 616–620), although the nature and architecture of this building (known only from photographs) are of extreme interest, it is very difficult with the existing evidence to establish a clear link with the statues and an identification of an imperial cult temple, a Sebasteion. In terms of buildings the imperial cult has been verified in two locations. The first is the reconstructed Ionic temple in the west sector (Fig. 16), north of the Serapeion, where according to T. Stefanidou-Tiveriou the temple housed the cult of the emperor in the context of a revival of the ancient cult of Zeus Eleutherios and of Roma (Stefanidou-Tiveriou 2009b, 624–627; 2012). The second, as we have already seen, concerns the terrace to the north of the square of the agora, where two apsidal buildings (Fig. 16) with two colossal acrolithic imperial statues were discovered (Stefanidou-Tiveriou 2009b, 620–624).

Various buildings that could have hosted the imperial cult have been recognized in Thasos where an inscription found in the Agora speaks about the "temples of the Augusti" (Dunant and Pouilloux 1958, 185, I.17 and I.21 (τῶν Σεβαστῶν ναοί); Evangelidis 2008, 134). A relatively small rectangular monument was constructed in an axial position to the great altar of the north-west corner of the agora in the 1st century AD (Dunant and Pouilloux 1958, 178). An orthostate with a dedication to Augustus' grandson Lucius and a marble head of a statue that might have represented him were found in the vicinity of the monument, indicating that the monument (probably roofed) was dedicated to the cult of Augustus and his heirs (Chamoux 1950; Grandjean and Salviat 2000, 26). The monument may have been surrounded by bases carrying other statues of the imperial family. Augustus and his family were possibly venerated in another space in the agora, a paved peristyle courtyard which held an exedra and different statue bases. The court, a donation of a certain Komis, a priestess of Livia, was constructed outside the north-west entrance of the complex backing onto the north-west stoa (Grandjean and Salviat 2000, 60). Finally, an apsidal room next to the Ionic Propylon (see Fig. 14) that separated the court of the agora from the food

market might have hosted the cult of Hadrian since a large statue of the emperor was found *in situ* (Grandjean and Salviat 2000, 71).

One of the most interesting building complexes associated with the cult was discovered in the small city of Kalindoia, securely identified with a site 2 km south of the present-day village of Kalamoto, in a place known as Toumbes or Kastellia (Sismanidis 2008). Systematic excavations, which began in 2003, have brought to light a complex of 11 rooms with an overall length of 97 m (numbered in a north–south sequence with letters from A to L; see Fig. 18), opening behind a deep stoa (6 m) towards the central public space of the city. The complex named conventionally "Sebasteion" by the excavator K. Sismanidis seems to be part of a larger peristyle agora (Brozou 2020, 138). All the rooms were richly decorated with marble polychrome veneer and panels with polychrome plaster, better preserved in room ΣΤ (Sismanidis and Kakamanoudis 2010) which functioned as the archive of the city. The excavation data indicate that the different rooms behind the stoa were added and furbished gradually over the course of the 1st century BC–1st century AD. Some rooms (Η, Θ, Ι) functioned as reception halls for communal meals or *exedrai* while others like rooms Α, Β and Γ served cultic

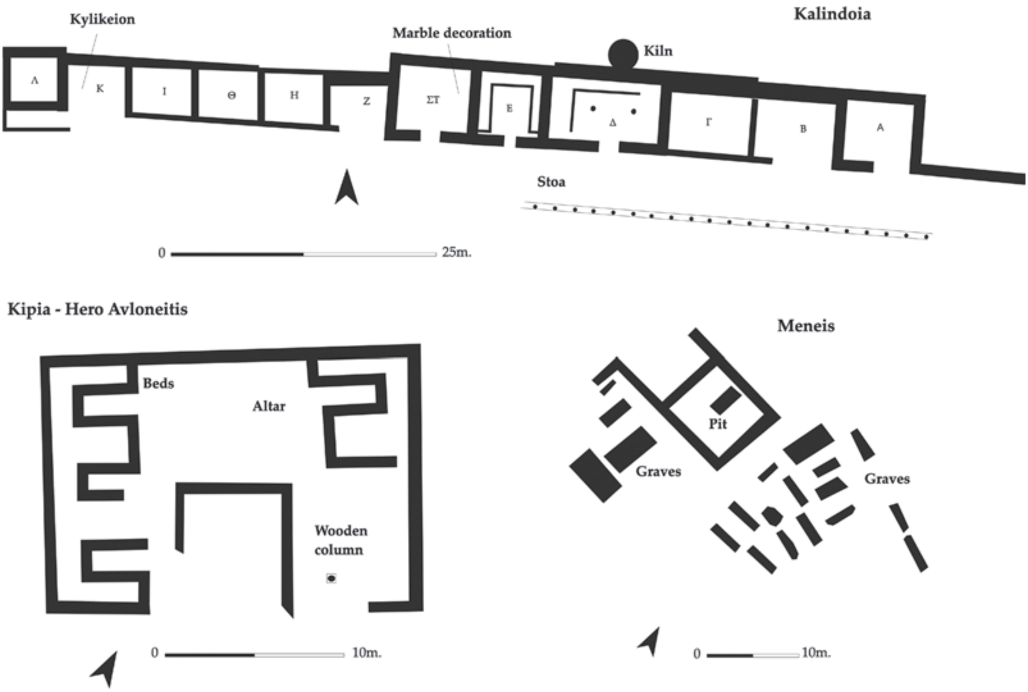

Figure 18. The imperial cult complex in Kalindoia, the Building II in the sanctuary of Hero Avloneitis in Kipia and the complex of Dionysos in Meneis (digital drawing author). Kalindoia based on: Sismanidis and Kakamanoudis 2010, 389, fig. 1. Hero Avloneitis-Kipia: Koukouli-Chrysanthaki and Malamidou 1990, 504, fig. 1. Meneis: Chrysostomou 2000, 459, fig. 2.

purposes, related to the imperial cult. The latest addition of them, room Γ was built by the family of a certain Flavia Mysta, a powerful matron of the city the family of which controlled the imperial cult in the city at the end of the 1st century AD.

The case of Kalindoia, a rather insignificant city in the hinterland of Chalkidike, confirms the importance of the cult in many small towns across the province (Galli and Tozzi 2016, 239–259). Connected with sacred meals and communal gatherings, the cult was an integral part of the city's public life, a conveyor of imperial ideology and a focus of loyalty for the population. At the same time the fact that the cult was introduced on the initiative of members of the local elite and that it remained in the hands of one family (that of the priest of Zeus and Roma, Sopatros) for a very long time points to another characteristic of the cult, namely its role in reinforcing social verticality (Daubner 2016, 391–416).

Cult places were of central importance in the non-urbanized rural areas of the province. The understanding of their function in the socio-political organization of these areas offers valuable insight into the construction of local (or even supralocal) identities. Whereas many of the sanctuaries that were primarily located in the mountainous, upland areas of Upper Macedonia or eastern Macedonia are small open-air sanctuaries, others like the sanctuary of Mother Autochthonous (Mother Indigenous) in Lefkopetra in Mt. Bermion or the sanctuary of Hero Avloneitis in Mt. Pangaion, are much larger in terms of monumentality, decoration, votive gifts and sacrifices. The supralocal importance of these large sanctuaries is marked by their apparent isolation. In this light, the sanctuary of Hero Avloneitis may have marked the territory of a larger sociocultural entity like the colony of Philippoi and the temple of Lefkopetra might relate to larger sociocultural acts like manumission. Many smaller sanctuaries like the sites at Psalida in Kastoria (Chatzinikolaou 2010, 200) in Upper Macedonia could have been the focal points of thriving rural communities which cannot always be easily detected archaeologically.

One of the most interesting rock temples of the Imperial period, dedicated to Apollo, the nymphs and Pan, was found at the impressive site of Black Rock 2.5 km north-east of modern day Sidirokastro (in eastern Macedonia), and very close to the River Krousovitis. in an area of amazing natural beauty (Peristeri and Chalkipopoulou 2005). The rock cave was accessed through an impressive gorge carved by the torrential River Krousovitis. Part of the floor of the cave was delimited by a terrace wall (3.50 m long) which enclosed an area of ash and finds of the Imperial period (2nd–4th century AD) that have been interpreted as fragments (broken statues, pottery and coins) left behind by Christians who destroyed the temple in the 4th century AD. A stairway carved into a tall limestone rock led to another space 5 m above the floor, where there was an arched niche carved into the rock; in the centre there was a semicircular base and five smaller bases for the placement of cult statues. At the base of the stairway there was a podium with three steps, near which a fragment of a marble base bearing a dedication to the god Apollo, part of a bust of Apollo of the Citharoedus type and a headless statue of the god Pan were found. Other votive objects of Imperial date

identify the deities honoured there as Apollo, Nymphs and Pan, all of whom had links with healing properties and nature. Clearly, sculpture and written dedications were mere Graeco-Roman embellishments of old customs and beliefs since natural caves had been venerated and held in awe from very early times.

Also in the area of eastern Macedonia, the excavations conducted at the hill site near the village Kipia at the foot of Mt. Pangaion have brought to light a sanctuary of a *hero* represented as a "Thracian rider" in statues and relief sculpture that were found in the area since 1968 and the first identification of the site. The god is recorded as "Auloneitis" in the inscriptions, a title related to the role of the god as guard of the passage – «αυλώνα» – from the valley of Pieria to the plain of Drama (Koukouli-Chrysanthaki and Malamidou 1989; 1990). The systematic excavations that started after 1985 revealed two rectangular buildings. The so-called Building I, with a north-east orientation seems to have the layout of a bipartite building. In its interior solid foundations for *klinai* (beds) bearing the names of notables from the Roman colony of Philippoi were found. The second building (or Building II) lying to the north-west, was larger (23 × 16 m) and it had the layout of a building organized around a central open court with an entrance through the open southern side (Fig. 18). Two large oblong rooms (perhaps open) one to the north-east and one to the south-west opened through a stoa with wooden columns (traces of two columns were found outside the north room) onto to the central court. In both rooms three masonry bases for *klinai* (characterized by the excavators as *triclinia* since they could fit more than one person), were built so as to look out towards the central court, a strong indication of ritual dinners that took place in the building. In the centre of the building, to the east part of the court, stood an altar, a rectangular structure made of small irregular stones. The layer above the altar and the surrounding area show strong traces of combustion and contain numerous fragments of burnt bones (mainly cattle and sheep), utensils used in sacrificial rites, iron spears and knives and abundant pottery, mostly kantharoi bearing the name of the Hero. Numerous wires and iron rings that were found scattered in the area inside and outside the building were linked to the transport of the sacrificial animals. Among the numerous votive fragments which were found in the sanctuary it is worth mentioning a statue base with the representation of the hero followed by animals, a fragment of drapery, a bearded head of Asklepios or Hercules and statue bases decorated with vine branches. Evidence from excavation under the Roman phase of Building II indicate the long use of the sanctuary from the Hellenistic (3rd century BC) to the Late Roman period, probably the time of Constantine II based on numismatic evidence. Despite its remote location the sanctuary seems to have been under the protection of the Roman colony of Philippoi. Due to its connotations of afterlife and heroization of the dead, the cult was important in the neighbouring colony of Philippoi since it is the only case of a local cult being depicted on a coin of the colony during the Imperial period. Despite the connection to the Roman colony, the sanctuary of Hero Avloneitis offers a very illustrative picture of a rural ritual landscape that lay mostly within the traditional

sphere. The buildings and the layout of these sanctuaries provide an illustration of what often was dominant in regions that were not in immediate contact with classical traditions. The open-air sanctuaries, the votive offerings and their position on hill tops depict much of what was the common language of polytheism in rural contexts. Whatever the classical architectural forms or the influence from nearby cities like Philippoi, these remained essentially local native cults of pre-Hellenic stock.

For a more comprehensive view of the rural religious landscape, one has to turn to the numerous sanctuaries in Upper Macedonia and other marginal areas like Aegean Thrace. A growing body of evidence from these sites enables us to view these rural sanctuaries in an increasingly sharp perspective with their closest analogies in similar sanctuaries in the hinterland of the Balkans. Their identification is mostly based on the votive offerings and finds and not on monumental architecture. Still the finds indicate a considerable distribution of such small sanctuaries in hilltops or on mountaintops, mostly sanctuaries of Zeus Hypsistos like the sanctuary at the site Psalida over Kastoria (ancient Kelletron) where Zeus was worshipped along with Hera and Hermes from the Late Hellenistic period onward (Chatzinikolaou 2010, 200), near villages and small towns (like the sanctuary of Ennodia at the site Exochi in Eordaia) or at passages, like the sanctuary of Apollo, Artemis and Dionysos at the site "Porta" or "Portes" of Xirolimni (an important crossing which connects Kozani to Mount Voion and western Greece in the Prefecture of Kozani) where a large number of mostly fragmentary inscriptions and sculptures were collected (Chatzinikolaou 2010, 201).

Another focus of religious feeling closely connected with concerns about virility, fertility, agriculture, pastoralism and health is expressed in the cult of the demi-god rider, the Hero Equitans or Rider (Triantaphyllos 1995–1998; Boteva 2011). Images of the rider god (Andrianou 2017) were especially common in areas of Thrace but during the Imperial period the god became a familiar Roman military motif. Many small undistinguished cult places have been identified at the highland of Rodope mts through surface reconnaissance in the late 1970s and early 1980s (for more recent research see Triantaphyllos and Koutsoumanis 2019–2020). Still many others may dot the landscape. These appear to have mostly functioned with a localized clientele offering central places at which locals could assemble. In them people of Thracian stock continued to participate in traditional religious practices although other ethnic groups may have been involved in these cults. As in the case of Hero Avloenitis, Greeks and Romans gradually shared these beliefs. The mountainous position though of some of the sites made them distinguishably local sites away from Hellenized or Romanized centres. We know little about the rites and function of any of these sanctuaries and the debate is ongoing. It is possible though that a link may have existed between such highland ritual places and the identity of groups or individuals; a link forged by traditional or spiritual associations and cultural identities attached to them.

When the discussion comes to more private forms of religion, many cultic associations offered an opportunity for individuals to experience religion in a more personal way as part of a special group of worshippers. In contrast to public rites, the

worship of such cults was held often in small structures, often of funerary character, that would have been accessible only to the individuals who had completed part of a stage initiation. A very interesting sanctuary consisting of a small temple and a number of graves around it was discovered in the early 2000s in the cemetery of a small rural settlement (Chrysostomou 2000, 454; 1999–2001) in the chora of the city of Meneis in Bottia (Fig. 15), which controlled the fertile valley of upper Loudias. The temple (4.90 × 7.15 m), built of local stone, had the typical form of *pronaos* and *sekos*, which contained a pit (1.80 × 1.35 m) full of ash, possibly for chthonic offerings (Fig. 18). The interior walls were plastered with white stucco decorated with yellow and red bands. An inscription engraved on the base of a statue informs us that the dedication was made by a certain priest *Makkios* (Maecius) and other worshippers (μύσται) with money collected from a common meal. Four richly furnished graves, securely dated to the 3rd century AD, two belonging to women, one to a child and the fourth to a male (possibly Maecius himself) were built inside the temenos of the temple while 19 more simple burials, mostly unfurnished, were discovered to the south. The excavation data led the excavator P. Chrysostomou to propose that this was the funerary sanctuary (constructed sometime during the Severan period) of a local private association connected to the worship of Dionysos as the term *μύσται* indicates (Chrysostomou 2000, 463–467). An inscription from Abdera where a certain G. Cassius Sextus (Chrysostomou 2000, 466, n. 17) dedicated a *megaron* (a temple with a ritual pit) to Dionysos and another from Alistrati (a Roman *vicus* of the colony of Philippoi) where mystai of *Botrys Dionysos* honoured their chief priest Rufus Zeipas (Pilhofer 2009, 522) led Chrysostomou to propose that this was an association linked to the Dionysiac cult. This is a fascinating discovery not only because we have an almost complete image of the funerary habits of closed group of worshippers but also because it is indicative of the distribution of such small cultic associations in the small towns of the province. Interestingly, as noted by Chrysostomou (2000, 465), a similar small temple with two burials in its interior has been found on a rural site near the city of Kyrrhos, very close to the route of Via Egnatia and the site of *mutatio Scurrio*.

One last category of evidence for ritual activity to cite is the veneration of Alexander (Rizakis and Touratsoglou 1999). Interestingly, this coincides with the revival of an interest in the Macedonian kingdom and the commemoration of Alexander the Great that swept the province of Macedonia at the time of the late Antonine and Severan periods (see Chapter 1.3 about the cult of Alexander and Dracon). Among the numerous fragments of Roman sculpture discovered in the north terrace of the agora of Thessaloniki, there are three inscribed slabs bearing the names of Alexander the Great, Thessalonike and Alexander IV. The slabs belonged to a large pedestal carrying most probably a monumental group depicting the Argeads, the royal house of Alexander the Great (Evangelidis 2018). The evidence so far indicates the existence —somewhere in the Area Sacra— of a cult dedicated to the Argeads, which must be seen exclusively as a Roman period phenomenon related to the idealization

of Alexander in the Roman world and the special interest that the Severi showed towards the conqueror and his family.

Finally, a place to which people turned for veneration was monuments of the past. Originally, the new reality of Roman Macedonia found a strong manifestation in the gradual abandonment and looting, during the Late Hellenistic to Early Imperial period of many of the great burial mounds that marked the resting place of the landowning aristocracy of Macedonia (Schmidt-Dounas 2016). This was a phenomenon clearly linked to the disappearance of the old elite after the conquest, but the significance of these imposing monumental landmarks for local societies remains largely unknown. These were sites that could have been used for local rites, for reburials in the tomb itself or along the tumulus as "tourist" attractions or simply as taboo sites engulfed by mystery (Curta 2016). However, the 4th-century BC Macedonian Tomb D in Pella (Chrysostomou 1994, 56–59) seems to have been visited frequently after it's looting, sometime at the beginning of the 1st century BC, by individuals who left graffiti with obscene language and pederastic content. After the clearance of the main entrance in the late 2nd century AD, however, the tomb was made more accessible to visitors who added new graffiti to mark their presence. Among them, a dedication to the hero Alexander and to Cassander indicates that the tomb might have been perceived by some as a monument from the period of the old Macedonian Kingdom.

Chapter 10

An architecture of entertainment: theatres and spectacle buildings

If the reorganization and redesign of the central public spaces and the construction of new public buildings such as the basilicas or the *macella* represent the public face of the city, the area where public and commercial life was facilitated, theatres and spectacle buildings reflect another important aspect of urban life during the Imperial period: entertainment. The introduction of theatre and music contests was a relatively late innovation in the cultural life of the old kingdom; it has been attributed to the initiative of the enlightened king Archelaos (414–399 BC) who among the artists that he had invited to his new court in Pella, was the great tragic poet Euripides (Adam-Veleni 2010, 34–36; Moloney 2014, 234–240). Archaeological evidence, such as the numerous relief bowls with scenes from tragedies by Euripides (Giannou 2016, 107) that have been found in Pella and elsewhere, but also literary sources all speak about the presence of theatrical activities in Hellenistic Macedonia (Giannou 2016, 30–92), but whether these theatrical performances were exclusively an elite court phenomenon or had a wider appeal to the predominantly rural population remains unknown.

The Greeks held most of their dramatic and musical shows in stone-built monumental theatres, which occasionally functioned as places for public assemblies (Sear 2006). In this respect Macedonia was not an exception, and a number of theatres of the Late Classical and Hellenistic period have been discovered (or are known by textual evidence) not only in Greek cities such as Thasos, Maroneia, Abdera or Larissa, but also in more typical Macedonian cities like Aigai, Philippoi, Demetrias, Dion, Mieza, Beroia and Lychnidos (a thorough analysis in Di Napoli 2018, 322–323). Typologically interesting is the stone Hellenistic theatre in Mieza (Sear 2006, 418; Poulakakis 2008; Allamani *et al.* 2012) near the agora where the uncovered *parodoi*, the auditorium built against a hillside and the two storey *proskenion* decorated with Doric half-columns refer clearly to typical Greek models while the *analemma* (retaining) walls which run parallel to the *skene* building, and the half shape of the earth orchestra have been regarded as western Roman. Many of these typological features, as noted by V. Di Napoli (2018, 332), seem to date to a 2nd-century BC phase, when the Roman theatre was attaining

its characteristic form. Mieza was a place the architecture of which (especially its domestic buildings) shows typically Roman features, representing a ground where ideas from the West and the Greek world might have mixed. In Dion, the ceremonial and religious centre of the kingdom, a large Hellenistic theatre (last quarter of the 3rd century BC) was built outside the city walls on flat ground near the area of the sanctuary of Zeus Olympios (Sear 2006, 416, plan 440, with bibliography; Karadedos 2012a, 73–89. For a previous building phase: Adam-Veleni 2010, 89, nos. 131 and 133). The larger than semicircle auditorium held simple mud-brick made seats (later covered with marble) which were supported by an artificial gravel mound due to the ground being flat. The surviving fragments show a *proskenion* (the columned porch in front of the skene) adorned with Doric piers; an underground passage led directly to the centre of the orchestra allowing sudden appearances for the performers. At a later date, probably in the 2nd century AD when the Hellenistic theatre was abandoned, another relatively large – probably roofed – theatre which could host five thousand spectators was built near the sanctuary of Zeus Olympios (Sear 2006, 416–417, plan 441; Palaiokrassa 2012, 91–100). This was a typical Roman theatrical building the auditorium of which was supported by 14 vaulted substructures, surrounded by a ring corridor. The *skene* had a rectilinear type façade with five doors and a *proskenion* larger than the skene itself, while the orchestra had a horseshoe shape.

Both theatres in Mieza and Dion continued to function during the Imperial period, like many other theatres in Greece that hosted both theatrical performances and Roman spectacles. Many, such as those in Philippoi, Thasos, Demetrias, Larissa, and Lychnidos underwent significant alterations in accordance with the current Roman fashion: integration of the *skene* building to the sides of the cavea of Philippoi, and the erection of a tall columnar *scaenae frons* in Demetrias, Philippoi and Thasos (Di Napoli 2018, 337). During the Imperial period the conventional drama and music contests that were held at the theatre were supplemented with spectacles that were held either at the circus or the amphitheatre (gladiatorial combats, beast hunts, etc.). These Roman-style spectacles in Macedonia might go back to the 2nd century BC when were they were first held by Aemilius Paulus in 168 BC in Amphipolis to celebrate his victory against Perseus (Giannou 2016, 110).

From the 1st century AD gladiatorial combats and wild beast hunts (*venationes*) were systematically organized in combination with the official games held during the Macedonian Koinon´s conventions and closely linked to the imperial cult. Today it is often hard to reconcile the positive aspects of Roman life like the visit to the baths or the sensorial effect of running water with the blood sports, the gladiatorial shows, the slaughter of wild animals and the public executions. Gladiatorial shows though were fundamental to the sociocultural system of the empire and a great many resources and logistical effort was put into buildings such as amphitheatres with their sophisticated architecture in crowd control, the training of gladiators or the provision of wild animals. How far the blood games were something more than a social athletic event remains unclear but there are indications that there might have

been a religious element which during the Imperial period may have been associated with the cult of the ruling house. Despite the vulgarity of the spectacles there was a systematic effort to intellectually justify the necessity of the games, as is obvious in Pliny (*Panegyric* 33) who saw the contempt of death even in slaves and criminals as a moral lesson to society. Although it is often claimed that such shows were confined to the West or at best were attractive only to Italian immigrants, in the East the rich epigraphical evidence proves otherwise (Mann 2010, 124–149). Amphitheatres, however, were less common in the East and most of the major Greek cities had to do with their existing theatres which were gradually transformed into a space for gladiatorial games and *venationes*.

The theatre of Thasos (Grandjean and Salviat 2000, 105–108; Sear 2006, 420, plan 446), nested in a natural depression on the mountainous north-east side of the city near the wall (Fig. 19), is a typical case of such a transformation (Bonias 2012). During the Imperial period part of the old 4th-century BC stage building was demolished and a new Roman-style *scaenae frons* with three doors was built. Meanwhile, sculpted reliefs were added to the metopes of the Hellenistic *proskenion*, a 12 Doric-columned building of the 3rd century BC, donation of a certain Lysistratus who was memorized on the architrave. The reliefs depicting Dionysos with a panther, the Thracian god hero on horseback, and Ares have been thought to reflect the dual function of the Imperial period theatre as a stage for theatrical performances (Dionysos) as well as gladiatorial games (Ares). Another matron of the blood sports the goddess Nemesis is present on a relief on the southern pier of the *proskenion*, donation of a certain Euemeros son of Dionysios, while several gladiators commissioned reliefs of Nemesis and inscribed their names on the walls of the stage building. In order to accommodate the *munera* (entertainment acts), the orchestra (diameter 75 m) was transformed into an arena (Karadedos and Koukouli-Chrysanthaki 2007, 280–282, figs 17–19): both parodoi were blocked with doors, a high podium was built around the orchestra topped by a removable grill for the protection of the spectators, the first five rows were cancelled and an awning system was placed above the *koilon* (cavea) in order to provide shade during the shows. The construction (around AD 140) of the marble podium, which was a donation from a certain Heragoras son of Euphrillos and his wife Hispane, is memorialized in an inscription covering the marble slabs of the podium. The couple seems to have been actively engaged in the organization of wild beast hunts (*κυνήγια*) and gladiatorial combats (*μονομαχίας*) since Hispane appears also in an inscription from Thessaloniki.

Similar to Thasos, in Philippoi the Hellenistic theatre (Fig. 19), perhaps the oldest remnant of the old city built by Philip II, underwent a series of changes that brought it in accordance with Roman models and eventually in the 3rd century AD turned it into an arena (Karadedos and Koukouli-Chrysanthaki 2012; Di Napoli 2018, 329–332). These included the erection of a new *scaenae frons* of the rectilinear type with two tiers of columns, the extension of the cavea above the now vaulted parodoi, the construction of a vaulted passageway around the auditorium in order to support the

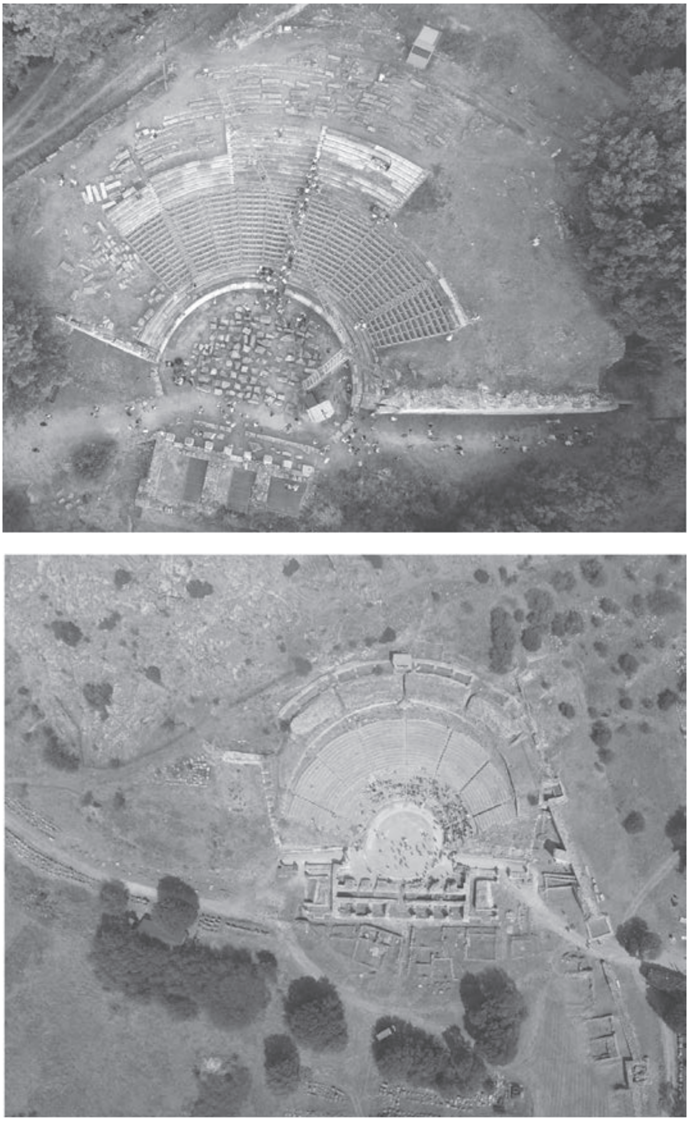

Figure 19. Aerial view of the theatres of Thasos and Philippoi (source: Diazoma Association – photos taken by F. Koutroumbis).

summa cavea, the enlargement of the orchestra and its pavement with marble, the removal of the lowest rows of seats and the construction of a podium (h. 1.20 m), with three doorways leading respectively to the three central staircases of the auditorium. The space behind the *scaenae frons* was occupied by a three-storey stoa with a row of arcades decorated with reliefs from the world of Dionysos, among them one with

Lykourgos chased by the Maenads and another with panthers drinking from a kantharos, satyrs' masks, and baskets full of fruit. Fragments of sculpture, among them a seated Muse and a small statuette of Eros and a dolphin, most probably belong to the decoration of the *scaneae frons*. This early phase is traditionally dated to the 2nd century AD, but new evidence, as noted by V. Di Napoli (2018, 329), might indicate a date closer to the end of the 1st century AD. During the 2nd century AD an *epitheatron*, an extension at the top of the *cavea*, enlarged the capacity of the auditorium while a high parapet/podium was added around the orchestra with protective nets for the safety of the crowd. Despite the podium and the protective measures, the preservation of the wooden *proskenion* and the character of the sculptural decoration indicate that the theatre continued to facilitate both theatrical performances and gladiatorial games. It is only in the 3rd century AD that the theatre seems to fully transform into an arena. The wooden proskenion was removed, a higher protection parapet with strong nets, reaching a total height of 3.70 m was added and the orchestra became fully circular. Most importantly, an underground space was built under the orchestra (*fossa bestiaria*) from where wild beasts could be lifted up into the arena (Karadedos and Koukouli-Chrysanthaki 2007, 279). All this shows a serious investment in the transformation of the theatre into an arena, a transformation that is also reflected in the sculptural decoration. As for the decoration, Nemesis, the matron of gladiators, along with Nike and Ares (Aristodemou 2015) made its appearance on the piers of the arched doorway that led from the western entrance into the orchestra, while another relief figure of Nemesis was carved on the keystone of this same arched entrance.

The modifications that brought the Greek theatre closer to an arena (or made the existing infrastructure suitable to host *munera*) are well illustrated in the case of Maroneia (Karadedos & Karadima 2002a – b; Sear 2006, 422, plan 449), the large city that dominated the area east of the Lake Vistonis. There, the two-storey Hellenistic *skene* was supplemented with a brick built *proscaenium* with a decoration of half columns, the *proedria* (seats of honour) was removed, a deep drain running along the orchestra was covered with slabs and a large protective podium was built around the orchestra. Textual evidence indicates the popularity of the gladiatorial games in Maroneia (Karadedos and Koukouli-Chrysanthaki 2007, 283) and similar evidence can be found in the other great urban centre of the Thracian coast, Abdera. Inscriptions (Di Napoli 2018, 335) such as the one that refers to a certain Marcus Ulpius Autolycus as organizer of gladiatorial contests in Abdera and a funerary stele of an unnamed citizen who sponsored a three-day gladiatorial games are evidence that blood games were held in the theatre of Abdera, of which unfortunately only scant remains have been preserved: the foundations for its lower 13 rows of seats have been brought to light to the north-east of the city, near the walls (Di Napoli 2018, 335).

If the examples of Thasos, Philippoi and Maroneia provide evidence for the transformation of a pre-existing theatre into an arena, then the theatre of Stobi (Fig. 20) and its contemporary theatre of Heraclea Lyncestis are typical examples of buildings that were designed from the beginning to house both activities. It is probably no

coincidence that both were built in places that did not previously have any permanent infrastructure related to theatrical activities. Instead, they were new cities that developed mainly during the Imperial period. Even so, it is no surprise that the multifunctional type of Greek theatre was chosen instead of the Roman amphitheatre. This probably indicates that classical plays were still popular with large sections of the population and a solution that would have sufficiently covered both activities had to be found.

The original 1st-century AD phase of the theatre in Stobi (Gebhard 2018) is hardly discernible but in the 2nd century AD the building was rebuilt with a large *scaenae frons* and an arena-like orchestra surrounded by a thick and tall podium (h. 1.60 m, w. 0.80 m) (Fig. 20) bearing a detachable metal protective grill (h. *c.* 1 m) and a barrier across the front of the *skene* which cut it off from the blood games in the orchestra (Wiseman and Mano-Zissi 1971, 417–419; Gebhard 1981a, 13–27). Five staircases led from the orchestra to five (functional) doorways opening in the *scaneae frons* which comprised two storeys of ten unfluted columns each, made of pink-coloured limestone with composite capitals (Gebhard 1981b). Niches covered with white stucco, decorated the rear wall of the two central niches of the *scaneae*. The cuirassed statue of an emperor, most probably Hadrian, crowned by two Victories was set inside the eastern niche. The whole composition is characteristic of the general lack of elaborate decoration (Di Napoli 2018, 333). The cavea (Pavlovski 2020; 2021) was supported in a totally Roman fashion on radial vaults and could accommodate up to 7,600 spectators, seated at specific places arranged by their social status and tribal affiliation (Pavlovski 2018). The first four rows were built in a dark grey marble, and they were double the size (0.80 m) of the other rows, reserved thus for the most prominent of the citizens. More importantly an official magistrate's box placed over the central refuge accentuated the hierarchical structure of the theatre. A large earthquake that caused general destruction in the city during the end of the 3rd century AD (see also the destruction of the temple of Isis) caused damage to the cavea and the *scaneae*

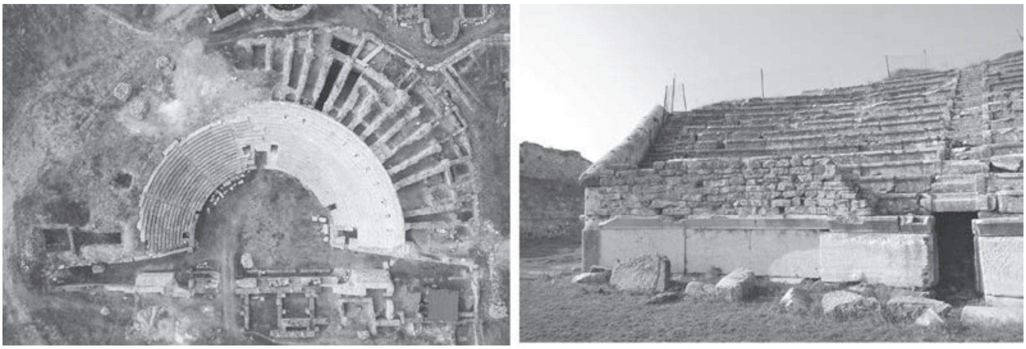

Figure 20. Aerial view of the theatre of Stobi. The parapet and the koilon (source: G. Pavlovski, National Institute Stobi).

frons. By this time the building must have been fully transformed into an arena and a more secure system for the protection of spectators was adopted which involved a thick masonry wall built on the upper part of the podium (total h. 3.60 m) which completely blocked the view from the first five rows of seats (Fig. 20), the blockade of both parodoi with gates and the construction of a long wall with three doorways in front of the scene building (Di Napoli 2018, 333). The conversion of the theatre into an arena is more emphatically reflected in the conversion of the central room of the *skene* building into a sanctuary of Nemesis, in which dedications by the Augustales, or priests of the imperial cult, to Ultrix Augusta, the Roman equivalent of Nemesis, but also fragments of small statues and a dedicatory inscription to Nemesis in Greek were discovered. Similar features, such as the rectilinear *scaenae frons* with the three doorways, the absence of the stage, an orchestra/arena covered with fine sand, a high podium built of orthostates and a protective device made of nets or grills, appear in the almost contemporary (Hadrianic) theatre of Heraclea Lyncestis (Janakievski 1987; Sear 2006, 417, plan 442). Here the matron of the games, Nemesis, found her place in a small temple built in the middle of the *cavea*. Both buildings continued their life until Late Antiquity; the theatre of Stobi until the time of Theodosius and the theatre of Heraclea until the end of the 5th century AD, when the area became residential and many spolia were reused in the large Early Christian Basilica that was built nearby. It is therefore clear that despite the popularity of the games, the typical western amphitheatre did not find a suitable ground for development, even in the newly developed cities such as Stobi or in the Roman colonies. We cannot of course rule out the existence of non-permanent wooden structures that were erected whenever the conditions required it, especially during the early years.

The only building that perhaps approaches the form of the amphitheatre in its Roman form is the partially preserved theatre stadium in Thessaloniki, a building that according to all archaeological data was in use from the end of the 1st to the 4th century AD (Velenis and Adam-Veleni 1989; 1993; 2012; Sear 2006, 420–21). The building, or more specifically part of its rather large eastern seating area (with a width more than 100 m), came to light during the early 1990s in an area which lies in close proximity to the palace of Galerius, in the centre of modern Thessaloniki (Adam-Veleni 2011, 558). Earliest finds of straight thick walls with a western direction (see Fig. 12) towards the Middle Byzantine church of St Sophia seem to belong to this large building that combined the structural features of the typical theatre with those of the stadium. Excavation in the early 1990s revealed a colonnade of pillars which decorated the outer cavea ring on which the last tiers of seats were set. In the middle of the width of the curved wall, which is up to 3.5 m wide a staircase with two flights symmetrical to the axis of a semi-cylindrical arch was found along with a thick wall that probably belonged to the enclosure of the complex. Literary evidence such as the famous *Lucius or Ass* by Pseudo-Lucian attests to the existence of a large spectacle building at Thessaloniki, linked to gladiatorial games as well as with more conventional athletic games such as those held in the city during the 4th Pythiad (AD 252).

Most importantly, the building has been identified with the theatre/stadium mentioned in the Byzantine sources (*PG* 116.1174¬1184) and seems to be linked to the events surrounding the martyrdom of the patron saint of Thessaloniki, Demetrius. This, according to its excavators, may have been the building where the disciple of the Saint, Nestor fought against the gladiator Lyaeus, champion of Galerius. The fact that the building might have held gladiatorial games and wild beast shows is supported by an inscription that records the death of the wild beast fighter Maximinus in a *refugium*, a safe place to which gladiators who received fatal wounds in the arena could retreat to recover or die (Nigdelis 2006, 239 no. 72). Undeniably, there must have been a close connection between the spectacle building, the Galerian palatial complex to the east and the large bath complex at the western end (south of the site of St Sophia, where the subterranean galleries of the holy spring of St John lie today), the place where most probably the martyrodom of St Demetrius took place. All these large buildings together would have formed a monumental axis with direction east–west. The theatre/stadium, built as a single, isolated monument, stood at the head of the street grid of Thessaloniki and served as the new focal point of the eastern region of the city, drawing attention away from the public centre of the agora.

Another category of theatrical buildings that are often found in the vicinity of the agora proper or in close proximity are the so-called Odeia. Despite the musical connotations of the name, these roofed small theatres could host both musical contests and performances as well as gatherings of political bodies. One of the best examples in Macedonia – fully restored today as part of the archaeological site of the Roman Agora – is the large odeion of the 2nd century AD that occupied the middle of the east wing of the agora of Thessaloniki (Fig. 21). The odeion, built *ἐκ θεμελίων* according to its dedicatory inscription, replaced an older rectangular hall with an internal cavea that has been interpreted as a bouleuterion (see Chapter 7). The fact that the building was squeezed in a space of given dimensions created a unique plan with all the accesses, for both actors and audience, placed in the façade of the building towards the stoa (Adam-Veleni 2001, 28). The spectators accessed the cavea through a rectangular anterchamber directly under the floor of the stage, and then passed to right and left, to the staircases leading up to their seats. Performers and speakers used the end accesses, whose marble frames are still visible at the archaeological site. The peculiarities, however, do not end there. The limited height of the proskenion, the raised floor of the orchestra just high enough for the actors to enter from the paraskenia, and the raised podium of the cavea (originally thought as an indicator for the host of gladiatorial games) were all solutions deriving from the small proportions of the building. Vaulted corridors held the cavea which could accommodate 400 spectators. The *scaenae frons* held at least nine statues, four of which, depicting Muses, were found *in situ* (Stefanidou-Tiveriou 2008, 100–101). The building met another last phase during the early 4th century AD when it turned into a theatre. The cavea extended to the east destroying pre-existing houses which were incorporated in the building, but also to the west destroying part of the stoa (Adam-Veleni 2001, 27–28).

Figure 21. The Odeion in the agora of Thessaloniki (photo: author).

Three out of the main five entrances were sealed and extra staircases led to the cavea. When in 1994 marble slabs were removed from the orchestra floor, these proved to be inscribed with invitations to contests of single combat, organized by prominent citizens in honor of the emperors (Nigdelis 1996; Adam-Veleni 2012). The inscriptions date to AD 250–260, and thus provide a firm *terminus post quem* for the construction of the odeion floor (Velenis and Adam-Veleni 1994, 162; Nigdelis 2012, 160, no. 15).

A similar lavishly built odeion, that could host at least 400 spectators was discovered in Dion on the east side of the Great Bath complex (Fig. 22), south of the forum (Sear 2006, 416–417; Karadedos 2012b, 101–118). Here the cavea set in a rectangular frame which supported the wooden roof and functioned as a retaining wall. The semicircular cavea with the brick-built steps (which were most probably covered by wooden panels) was supported by two solid, concentric semicircles, connected by radiating walls supporting wedge-shaped vaults. Traces of wood (burnt by a great fire that probably destroyed the building sometime during the 5th century AD) indicate that the orchestra also had a wooden floor. Multiple entrances led to the interior of the building: one from the nearby forum through two external staircases leading directly to the upper colonnade that framed the perimeter of the cavea, another through a portico that led to the west parodos and three more in the south wall (and through the Ionic style scaene frons) that looked into the central court of the Great Bath complex.

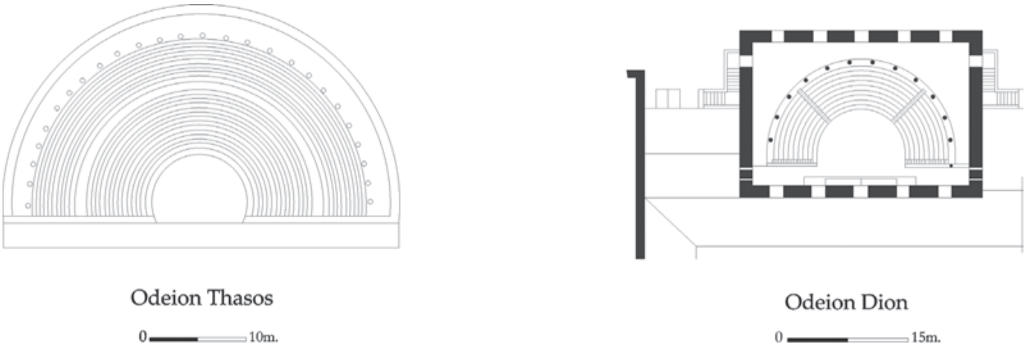

Figure 22. The Odeion of Thasos and Dion (digital drawing: Y. Kappos). Thasos based on: Bonias and Marc 2012, 246, fig. 1. Dion: Karadedos 2012b, 112, fig. 13.

As in other parts in the broader forum area a careful levelling of the ground preceded the construction of the odeion which in its course destroyed all traces of Hellenistic buildings. Although the annex of the basilica of the forum has been identified with the *curia* of the colony (see Chapter 7), it is also possible that public assemblies were held in the odeion. We should not forget that any small roofed theatrical building with the necessary access from the *cavea* to the stage (to accommodate the orators) could be used as a civil building whenever that was deemd appropriate.

Very similar to the odeion of Dion is the theatrical building that was discovered near the agora of Thasos in a new quarter that was developed during the 2nd century AD (Grandjean and Salviat 2000, 81–82; Bonias and Marc 2012). This was most probably a roofed odeion with a capacity of a thousand spectators that was built in *opus caementicium*. The semicircular cavea was supported by seven circular, probably vaulted, rooms while the unpaved circular orchestra was placed at a lower level than the auditorium. Access was achieved through the parodoi and two "encased" staircases that led to the cavea. The skene building remains unexcavated; originally it was thought that it was never finished, although today scholars favour a reconstruction as a simple stoa. As in the case of Thessaloniki and Dion, the building was thought to have served multiple functions that could have hosted the local *boule*, but its excavator J.Y. Marc (1994) seems to favour a more strictly theatrical use. Finally, a roofed theatrical building with an auditiorium based on radial chambers has also been found in Beroia (Siganidou 1979, 306; Adam-Veleni 2010, 112, fig. 79) although its state of preservation is fragmentary.

Little is known about the athletic events in pre-Roman Macedonia, but we can assume that as in South Greece they were central to great religious festivals. The problem is that the infrastructure for the hosting of these events (*dromos*, *stadion* or hippodrome) only rarely leaves tangible archaeological traces since in many cases they did not require much architectural elaboration. It is not a coincidence that the only pre-Roman stadium that has been identified in Macedonia is the one near

the sanctuary of Zeus Olympios in Dion, an earthwork feature that dates to the 5th century BC and continued its life till Late Antiquity (Pandermalis 1997, 11). It was constructed so as to follow the formation of the terrain to the south of the city and based on the existing evidence it never attained any permanent architectural form. Its track was made of consecutive layers of packed earth mixed with small fragments of pottery, while the seats, carved in the natural slope of the terrain, probably held wooden benches. Archaeological evidence suggests its uninterrupted function until Late Antiquity, an indication of the continuing popularity of athletic events in the cultural life of the province.

A variety of epigraphic and literary sources inform us that by the end of the 1st century AD games (described in the sources as *sacred, eiselastic, isaktioi*), many of them organized in relation to the imperial cult, were added to the traditional festivals of the Macedonians like the *Daisia* or the festivals for Asklepios. The festivities included not only athletic events but also music contests, orations, and gladiatorial games, all within the spectrum of spectacles popular during the Imperial period. The most famous of them, the *Alexandreia* in Beroia (Burrell 2004, 193–194; Touratsoglou 2006, 294–295) and the *Pythia* in Thessaloniki (Giannou 2016, 125–128), were organized every four years and clearly had an ecumenical appeal attracting artists, athletes and gladiators from all corners of the empire. To these we should add a number of annual festivals organized by local communities or by individuals with great cost and expense. To the major and more typical events we should probably add pantomime acts and acrobatic or conjuring spectacles, which included acts and performers such as the *ischyropaiktes* (athletes who demonstrated their physical strength), *kontopaiktes* (tightrope walkers and other balancing artists), *hoplopaiktes* (jugglers who handled weapons) or *psephopaiktes* (jugglers who used pebbles). Epigraphical evidence such as the inscription of C. Titus Uttiedius Venerianus (Di Napoli 2018, 338) from Drama informs us about the popularity of these spectacles in the everyday life of the province in contexts that did not necessarily have to be only public.

Chapter 11

An architecture of water: aqueducts, baths, latrines, fountains

Because of their large scale, tall theatrical buildings became one of the most dominating symbols of the urban landscape embodying the essence of the city of Imperial times as a space for "unique" experiences and entertainment. It is however in the field of water management and water-related architecture that someone can see the well-being and livability of the city, including urban health and social interaction. Advanced hydraulic engineering and an extensive manipulation of water resources for use and display have long been regarded as the most characteristic achievement of the Roman world (Wilson 2008). Aqueducts and water-related buildings or features convey messages of a society that was interested in something more than the provision of water for drinking and washing; a society where the sensorial effect of running/flowing water in fountains or nymphaea (Rogers 2021) and the social event of communal bathing played an important role in everyday life and the formation of the urban landscape (Purcell 1996; Wilson 2012).

This empire-wide phenomenon (Wilson 2001) represents a very important step forward in water exploitation and management, especially in comparison to previous periods. Despite the invention of some sophisticated hydraulic works, water management in most of the cities during the Classical and Hellenistic period had to deal with limited resources based quite often on private installations like small-size wells and cisterns or natural springs (for Greece, see Antoniou *et al.* 2006). This was a highly unreliable system dependent on a variety of factors like the level of the groundwater table, the flow of water (in springs) and the level of rainfall (Mays *et al.* 2013). This obvious resource shortage seems to have changed over the Imperial period due to the great number of aqueducts, reservoirs and tanks that dotted the Greek mainland and the islands (Lolos 1997; Hodge 2002). Nevertheless, it is worth noting that Macedonia never faced the water management challenges which certain areas of south Greece and the islands dealt with during the dry seasons. Macedonia is a water-rich region with adequate freshwater supplies from rivers and lakes, as well as highly productive alluvial and karstic aquifers which always provided enough water for drinking, agriculture, and manufacturing (Kaiafa 2008, 114). But as the needs grew during the

Imperial period long and medium distance water supply systems maximized the scale of both urban water supply and rural irrigation systems.

11.1. Aqueducts

Aqueduct channels with flat or vaulted roof covers have been located in different cities across the province such as Dion, Amphipolis, Edessa, Philippoi and Thessaloniki (Kaiafa-Saropoulou 2018). The aqueduct channel of Dion is one the earliest known Roman examples of the "pitched-brick" vaulting technique which as shown by L. Lancaster (2010, 114) was introduced from Parthia by military construction experts specializing in hydraulics. Archaeological research in the outskirts of Thessaloniki has brought to light evidence for the existence of a large irrigation scheme that crossed the eastern *chora* of the city for a length of 20 km or even more, bringing water from the springs of Mt. Chortiatis to the east end of the city (Manoledakis 2018). The project involved different communities in the eastern part of the chora of the city and ended outside the east wall of Thessaloniki. Not all irrigation schemes, however, were large-scale projects, since in most cases archaeology has revealed evidence for medium-length channels and qanat systems often organized at the level of local communities (Kaiafa 2008). The exact way that each building was supplied from this central system is quite often difficult to be verified archaeologically. Pipelines of water supply (stone built, clay and lead) have been found in different urban and rural sites but their exact connection with the main irrigation scheme is not always visible. Generally, it can be said that public water supply by aqueducts normally served fountains and baths, although, as noted by G. Fagan (1993, 141), this was not always a prerequisite, and many modest baths could have functioned without aqueduct-supplied water.

11.2. Baths

From all the different water-related features and buildings it is mostly baths that reflect in the most distinctive way this culture of water that came to characterize the Imperial period (DeLaine 1999a; Fagan 2001; Yegül 2010). The numerous remains of baths that have been found (in different state of preservation) at different urban and rural sites across the province (for Roman Greece, see Farrington 1999) highlight the deeply rooted habit of communal bathing as a quintessential social event of the Roman world (Fagan 1999, 1–12). This was a practice that did not involve only the act of cleanliness (Fagan 2000) and personal hygiene but also social contact, networking, business, relaxation or fitness (DeLaine 1999b).

The excavated public baths include some relatively large and lavishly furnished examples like those in Thessaloniki, Dion, Beroia and Philippoi. Apart from partially preserved baths in Thessaloniki and Beroia, the most complete urban baths surviving are the so-called Hall type baths of Dion and Philippoi. Next to them numerous small public baths of the most basic row type comprising a sequence of *frigidarium*,

tepidarium, *caldarium* and other supplementary features like the *apodyterion* (changing rooms) that have been found scattered in urban and rural contexts far outnumbered their larger public hall-type counterparts. Private baths of an irregular plan (many of them lavishly decorated with marble or mosaic pavements) have been investigated at many domestic sites especially in Thessaloniki and Beroia. In cases, as the large bath that was attached to the large urban mansion "Dionysos" in Dion, seem to have had a dual function; public and private.

The fragmented picture of many remains (especially in continuously inhabited cities like Thessaloniki or Beroia) and the quite often inadequate documentation pose serious limitations to the analysis of bath complexes. Identification of the individual rooms and spaces that comprised a bath is not always easy, especially when in most cases we have a very fragmented picture of the overall plan of the building. The understanding of the relationship between the spaces is often obscured by later phases, especially when during the Early Christian period many were transformed into workshops. In most of the cases the most easily identifiable features are the bathing facilities themselves due to their distinctive architectural characteristics and the characteristic presence of the *hypocauston*. The number, layout and sometimes the function of the rooms varied from case to case, but a typical arrangement would include a *vestibulum* opening in the main street, a central lavishly decorated hall (*Marmorsaal*) or (in the case of Macedonia) more rarely a *palaestra* type of court, anterooms where the visitors could undress and leave their clothing (*apodyterion*), marble-veneered and mosaic-floored rooms for socializing and relaxation and the bathing facilities themselves. These included the *frigidarium* or cold room often equipped with a deep immerse style *piscina frigida*, a warm room (*tepidarium*) which in the cold months could have functioned as *apodyterion*, and a hot room or *caldarium* with hot plunge baths. The frigidarium, during the 3rd century AD was enlarged and became increasingly more important in terms of surface, especially when compared to the heated sector of the baths. This is obvious in examples, like the ring type 3rd–4th-century AD baths that have been found in the area north of the agora of Beroia (Andreiomenou 1968b) the so-called 2nd-century AD "Bath of Sotas" in Thasos (next to the Northwest gate) and in Philippoi in the so-called "House of the Wild animals" where the large *frigidaria* include internal immerse pools or individual tanks. This trend is already pronounced in the 3rd century and becomes systematic in the 4th. Most often provided with one or two immersion basins, this room remains a *frigidarium*, but its function goes well beyond this: it is used as a resting room, a cloakroom, a meeting place, and thus becomes the most important room of the bathhouse. *Tepidaria* were usually located far from the hearths of the furnaces, they did not have a specific plan and sometimes had hydraulic installations for the provision of water. On the contrary, *caldaria* were heated directly by the furnace and included at least one plunge pool (rarely for immersing), which was usually placed exactly above the heating hearth.

Particularly common is the type of rectangular *caldarium* that ends in an apse featuring a shared bathtub (*alveus*), as was the case with the row-type bath (3rd–6th

centuries AD) that was discovered in Lefkadia near Naoussa (Daux 1960, 770–774). These hot rooms were generally roofed with a dome, a vault which was plastered in the interior. We do not know much about the roofing but – based on examples from North Africa – we may assume that the curve of the domes was externally visible, a feature that must have had considerable implications for the formation of the urban landscape. Rarer are the rooms of intense dry heat (*laconicum*); examples have been found in Dion (at the Forum Baths) and in a villa at the site Stephanina near Lake Volvi. The plan was completed with the service rooms, the *praefurnium* (furnace) and the hypocaust, the underfloor heating that revolutionized communal bathing since it brought for the first time an evenly distributed high temperature (Fournet and Redon 2013). *Suspensurae caldariorum*, raised floors (some 0.70 to 0.90 m) on small brick or stone pillars (*pilae*) that allowed the circulation of hot gasses produced by a furnace (*praefurnium*) have been located in different sites (Fig. 23) as the "Great Baths" in Dion. In some cases *impressos parietibus tubos*, or tubes placed inside the walls, often referred to as the tubuli system have also been identified as an extra form to extend the effectiveness of the heating produced by the hypocaust. The furnaces served the dual purpose of heating the rooms of the bath and heating the water used in these

Figure 23. Great baths in Dion: pilae (photo: author).

rooms and were normally placed in the periphery of the building, near the *caldarium*. They were sometimes roofed as in the case of the large praeufurnium 3.70 × 4.74 m discovered in a public bath in Beroia (in the suburb Promitheas, see Psara and Loulias 2006). The heat from the furnace, which was always built in proximity to the warm rooms, circulated under the raised floors (on brick or stone pillars) or more rarely upwards through the tiles that lined the walls.

The central hall which is a basic feature in many buildings (see below) has quite often architectural elaboration in the form of niches and statuary around the inner walls. These lavishly decorated central halls could occasionally serve as *apodyteria*, *frigidarium* or even as an indoor *palaestra* where athletic/gymnastic activities could have taken place as is probably the case with some paved rooms at the Forum Baths and the Baths of the Central Street in Dion or the north hall of the Bath at the site Nesi Alexandria. These halls quite often had columnar façades and elaborate decorative schemes of Ionic and Corinthian orders, niches and statuary around the inner walls. Benches and recesses in the wall have been used as indicators for the identification of spaces such as *apodyteria* or reception rooms. Such spaces have been securely identified in a Late Roman private bath (villa) in Velvento in Kozani (Tsiapali 2007, 47–50), in a public bath in the city of Edessa (Kaiafa 2008, 54–5) but also in the second Imperial period phase of an old Hellenistic balaneion in Pella (Lilimpaki-Akamati 2011, 399–404).

Despite the inadequacies of the archaeological record there is, however, sufficient material to draw an almost clear picture of the development of bath buildings in the Imperial period. Quintessential in this aspect is the study of the late A. Oulkeroglou (2016)[2] who managed to identify and classify some 97 bath buildings in the core of the old Macedonian kingdom based solely on archaeological evidence. A great number of them (51) seem to have been public in nature and they are located near the main public spaces like the agora, in sanctuaries and Early Christian basilicas or in major residential areas. Others (24), smaller in size and less elaborate, have been linked to domestic contexts, urban or rural villas, even though quite often the link seems tentative. The great majority of baths belong to the prosperous period of the Antonines and Severi, when even medium sized cities like Dion could boast four or five public baths. More than 12 large public baths have been found in Thessaloniki, but these were only partly uncovered, as opposed to Dion and Philippoi, where excavation was not hindered by modern buildings. Unfortunately, hardly any baths predating the Middle Roman period are known from the much-rebuilt cities of Macedonia. In Philippoi a bath near the forum may be an early Pompeian-style building but almost all the other buildings that have been excavated date after the middle of the 2nd century AD and until the middle of the 5th century AD. It is noteworthy, however, that many of them continued to function uninterruptedly until the Early Christian period, when bathing habits changed (though possibly not to the dramatic degree that we often imagine).

2 The study has been published in Greek in 2018 but the evidence I have used here comes predominantly from the PhD thesis.

Nonetheless, organized communal bathing in specially built accommodation was not new to the Macedonians. Public baths are known from various Hellenistic sites and their plans (Trümper 2009, 145–146), typically display clusters of rooms, often circular in shape (the so called *laconicum*) with individual hip baths with covered sides (for privacy and protection from splashing) arranged around the perimeter of the wall. Remains of two well-preserved Hellenistic bathhouses have been found one in Thessaloniki in the area where later the agora was built and the other in Pella. The latter occupied part of an insula south of the Agora and covers an area of 500 m^2 (Trümper 2009, 148; Lilimpaki-Akamati 2011, 399–404). The plan is almost square with a central open court (length 14 m) and entrances on the north, east and south sides. Rooms were arranged around this large central court, and among them a pool (7 x 4 m) and a round space (internal diam. *c.* 4.95 m) with pebble pavement and individual bathing tubs in a circular arrangement. Another rectangular room to the east of the swimming pool had its entrance to the north-east corner and was equipped with 18 individual clay tubs fixed on the internal face of the walls. Between the round and the rectangular bathing rooms with the tubs, an underground kiln with an air duct provided a new heating system for the building. In Thessaloniki part of a 2nd century BC bath (Adam-Veleni 1997; 2013) was excavated at the south-east corner of the agora, which was destroyed in AD 78, probably as part of the construction of the south wing of the agora. What survived from the Hellenistic complex was the circular sweating room (a *laconicum*) with 25 bathing tubs, a smaller circular room with a hypocaust to the south, a heated (with its own hypocaust) and cold-water swimming pools and a two-storey rectangular hall to the north. The rest of the bathhouse lies under the modern Philippou and Agnostou Stratiotou streets; it was suggested that this was part of a larger gymnasium or palaestra complex, which was mentioned in an ephebic catalogue. It is worth noting (Adam-Veleni 2011, 557–558) that the broader area retained this connection with water and bathing till modern times. This was the place where the elaborate Ottoman bathhouse, Bey Hamam, or, as it is more commonly known in Greek, the "Paradise Bathhouse", stood and functioned till the mid-1960s. The uninterrupted operation of the *balaneion* from the middle of the 2nd century BC to the end of the 1st century AD is probably indicative that in many cases such Hellenistic baths served the bathing needs until the widespread adoption of the new type of baths during the 2nd century AD.

11.2.1. Typology of public baths in Macedonia

The detailed functioning and the internal organization of each bath differed greatly from site to site and a number of parameters from location to cost and building materials may be responsible for the great variety of individual plans. Most of the excavated buildings represent complexes of modest scale and simple design. Besides some neat symmetrical layouts in cities like Philippoi, the largest number of baths are of assymetric design, which allowed different configurations in the city fabric. Amidst

a great variety of individual plans and layouts one can distinguish two basic types (based on the layout and the succession of rooms) in the bathing architecture of the area (Oulkeroglou 2016, 217–226). The first and the more widely used is the so-called axial row type where the plan followed an orderly scheme based on the succession of bathing suites (Yegül 1992, 66–90). This was the plan that was applied in many small baths (public and private) across the empire and met a great variation in its layout.

As a rule, the bathing facilities were arranged in a row with the *frigidarium* at the beginning and the *caldarium*, often ending in an apse which held a bathtub, at the end. Typical examples of the type include the so-called late 2nd-century AD "Kelepouri Baths" near the temenos of Olympios Zeus in its third phase in Dion (Oulkeroglou 2017, 308–310), the 2nd–3rd-century AD villa in Stephanina Thessaloniki (Adam-Veleni and Zographou 2003), the forum baths in the unidentified city in Nea Terpni in Serres (3rd century AD, see Karamberi 1994), the bath that adjoined the sanctuary of Ammon Zeus in Kallithea in Chalkidike (Tsigarida 2011), different Roman and Early Christian baths in Thasos (Oulkeroglou 2016, 199–200), Lefkadia near Naoussa (Daux 1960, 770–774) and, perhaps, the large (Galerian?) bath complex that occupied the south part of the Middle Byzantine Church of Agia Sophia at Mackenzie King street in Thessaloniki (Oulkeroglou 2016, 140–144). Due to its simple layout the type was widely used in domestic baths, with the most characteristic examples known from Dion (in the Late Roman "House of Zosas", see Oulkeroglou 2016, 112–113), Thessaloniki, at 11 Profiti Ilia Street (Bonini 2006, 512–13), at 90 Kassandrou Street (3rd–4th cent AD; Bonini 2006, 545–547), perhaps also the fortified villa at Oreokastro in Thessaloniki (Marki 2001–2004) and Philippoi, in the house of insula 4 (Gounaris and Gounari 2004, 98–100).

An illustrative example of the axial type is the 2nd-century AD bath that adjoined the temple of Ammon Zeus in Aphytis in Chalkidike (Tsigarida 2011, 180–1). This was a typical axial-type establishment with an entrance, an *apodyterion* (changing room) and then the typical arrangement of a *frigidarium*, *tepidarium* and *caldarium* all placed in a single row. This straight row of heated rooms behind a *vestibulum* echoes the typical arrangement of many small baths across the province. The *frigidarium*, placed immediately after the entrance probably had a central decorative water feature with four columns at the corners. Its walls were covered with frescoes and marble statues, fragments of which were found during the excavation. Protruding from the *frigidarium* was an *apodyterion* (with benches along its three walls) to the west and a pool of cold water to the east. North of the *frigidarium* opened the heated facilities of the bath, the *tepidarium* equipped with marble basins and the caldarium which ended to an apsed projection containing a heated pool. Both rooms seem to have been built not only with underfloor heating but also with heated walls. The bath met at least two construction phases during which the *praefurnium* originally situated to the west of the *tepidarium* was moved closer to the *caldarium*, probably for better performance in relation to the main bathing room and the original apodyterion was enlarged and included a small cistern. Just after the Gothic attack of the mid-3rd century AD benches

were constructed along the three walls of the *apodyterion* which covered the frescoes of the room and the size of the pool of the frigidarium was decreased.

Larger than the usual axial type, the second more frequent type of baths, the hall type baths, were ideal for large urban centres and crowded urban conditions. The type derives much of its structure from Early Imperial baths, but it is clearly much smaller in size, combining the functionality and economic viability of the row/axial type with the grandeur of decoration and leisure spaces that described larger ensembles. Here the bathing facilities and the leisure rooms were organized – as is evident by the name – around a central feature, a marble-veneered wooden truss-roofed, basilical hall which functioned as a circulation centre that gave access to the different wings of the complex. This large space, and others like it in baths, is recognized as a *basilica thermarum* (Yegül, 1992, 400), which probably served multiple functions including indoor athletic activities, convenient in the cold climate of Macedonia.

One of the best excavated and complete bath buildings which includes most of the basic features of Roman bath architecture are the so-called "Great Baths" in Dion (Pandermalis 1999, 138–151; Oulkeroglou 2017, 289–293), a relatively large complex (50 × 41 m), which occupied the insula to the south of the forum, directly next to the abandoned Hellenistic walls (Fig. 24). Excavations of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki during the 1970s revealed its plan covering an area of almost 2.100 m² to the west part of the insula and an equivalent (if not larger) open area (*palaestra*) with a small odeion along the east side. Although no pipelines have been found the complex seems to have been supplied by a large water tank (*castellum)*, with internal

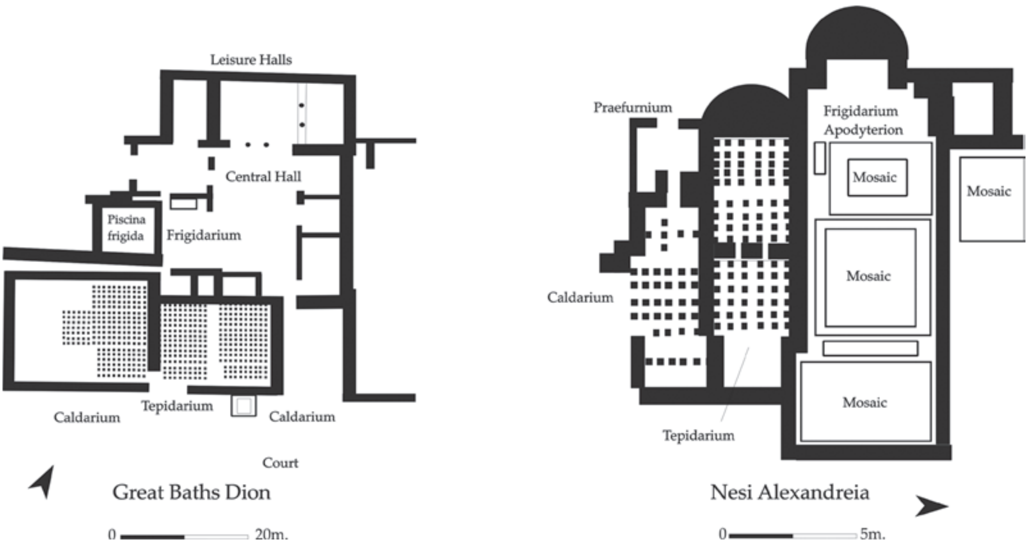

Figure 24. Hall type baths: The Great Baths in Dion and the Baths in Nesi Alexandria. Based on Oulkeroglou 2016, fig. 27. Nesi: Andreiomenou 1968a.

dimensions of 4.30 × 4.50 m, that has been investigated to the west. The core of the building is a large (18.80 × 13.40 m) lavishly decorated hall around which the different rooms and the bathing facilities were grouped. The central hall gave access to the equally lavishly furnished *frigidarium* which on its south side had a large and deep three stepped *piscina frigida*, measuring approximately 8 × 8 m, and two individual rectangular bathtubs. Shallow rectangular niches for sculptures have been discovered on the southern and northern walls of the pool while a marble spout in the form of a lion's head was found inside the large pool. An excellent colourful mosaic with a scene of a marine troupe flanked by floral and geometric motifs in the main hall of the frigidarium indicate the luxury and the extravagance of the construction. The north-east wing of the complex is occupied by large rooms decorated with marble revetments and mosaic floors. They all seem to have served the leisure functions of the complex and they opened to the central hall through trilobal openings. Two more rooms have been identified as apodyteria, while the bathing facilities proper occupied the south-west wing of the complex. Two large rooms (rooms 13 and 15 with dimensions approx. 15 × 13.50 m) with underfloor heating (both of which were built directly above the furnace of the *praefurnium*) have been identified as *caldaria* and another one as *tepidarium*. This was supplemented by another small room. A drain removed all the wastewater to a central vaulted sewer which crossed the open space to the east of the baths towards the latrine of the central road (*cardo maximus*). A series of shops (that we have already encountered in the Chapter 8) bridged the height difference between the *cardo maximus* and the terrace where the baths were built.

Besides the "Great Baths", Dion provides us with no less than four of the hall-type baths. The 1050 m² large "Baths of the Central Street" (Oulkeroglou 2010) and the contemporary semi-private baths attached to "Villa Dionysos" (Bonini 2006, 343–346; Oulkeroglou 2017, 302–305) are all relatively large public baths with a central hall and rooms around them. The late 2nd-century AD bath that occupies the north-east corner of the forum (Pandermalis 2004, 378–379; Oulkeroglou 2017, 293–297) displays the same basic composition, with the central hall (11 × 10.50 m) being the most distinctive element. The hall was accessed directly from the main entrance that opened to the *cardo maximus* of the city. In the "Forum Baths" this large hall led to other spaces equipped with stone benches to the north that have been identified as apodyteria and a separate marble paved three stepped piscine frigida to the south. The *piscina frigida* and a small corridor that bypassed it led to the heated rooms that occupied the south wing of the complex. A large roofed and stone paved space to the west of the main hall might have functioned as an indoor *palaestra*.

Similar lavishly decorated central halls adorned with mosaics and veneered with marble have been discovered at other sites like Philippoi (the so-called "Bath of the Glass Workshop insula", see Gounaris and Gounari 2004, 98–100), Pella (Lilimpaki-Akamati 2011, 404–409) or Nesi in Alexandria Emathia (Andreiomenou 1968a; Oulkeroglou 2016, 85–87), where two small pools (see Fig. 24) framed the central paved area which could have functioned as *frigidarium* or even as *apodyterion*. The

excavation conducted in the 1960s on this rural site in Emathia revealed part of a rectangular building measuring 16 x 18 m in plan. The building was divided in two parts: the south one includes two elongated hypocausts (preserved in the level of the tubuli), whereas the north one was an elongated space with an apsed projection on its west side. This north unit which has been identified as the *frigidarium*/central hall was adorned with magnificent polychrome mosaics with geometric and floral patterns. The apsed projection held a cold plunge while a second rectangular plunge opened to the north.

Other types of baths, such as the ring type, where the circulation pattern begins and ends in a *frigidarium* or an *apodyterion*, or the Pompeian type, which had an open courtyard or *palaestra*, are rare. The only bath in Macedonia where the presence of an internal yard (in the style of the old Hellenistic baths or Campanian baths) has been archaeologically confirmed is the bath (known as the "Balaneion of the Octagon") on the second insula to the east of the forum of Philippoi (28.30 × 28.20 m) (Gounaris and Gounari 2004, 81–86; Oulkeroglou 2016, 177–181). This was a small square space, measuring 7.50 × 7.50 m and framed on three sides by stoas. The marble-paved floor of the court dates from a later building phase and indicates that the court was then used mainly for ball games or for light exercises rather than as a wrestling ground. All the different rooms opened through a portico (width 3.20 m) to this central paved court, but the bathing facilities seem to have been clustered together in a row along the south side. The building met at least three different construction phases during which the central court gradually lost its importance. The main entrance was located in the middle of the north side along with other service rooms, but a second service entrance opened in the middle of the west side. The building is interesting not only for its early date but because it represents a plan which is clearly derived from models firmly established in Italy by the late 1st century BC. Therefore, it documents a very formative Roman influence on the provincial architecture.

Evidence for an external *palaestra* court has come to light, as we have seen, at the complex of the "Great Baths" in Dion and the bath in Stefanina, Thessaloniki (Oulkeroglou 2016, 167), where an outdoor area east of the building was interpreted as a possible relaxation space with bath tanks (*natationes*). A large court equipped with an outdoor pool (*natatio*) existed on the south side of a large bath building that has been excavated in the south suburb of the abandoned city of Pella (Lilimpaki-Akamati 2011, 404–409). Dating to the end of the 1st century AD or the beginning of the 2nd century AD, the bath occupied a site at the lake harbour of the city which now became the new nucleus of urban life, serving probably also the nearby Roman colony. The excavations brought to light six rooms covering a space of 1100 m² but there are clear indications that the complex was much larger including a space to the south with a large open-air swimming pool and an apsidal construction. The centre of the complex was a central hall – *frigidarium*, the function of which goes well beyond the conventional use as cold room: it was used as a rest room, a cloakroom and as a meeting place for the bathers. The bath block itself displays two apsed rooms identified as the

tepidarium and *caldarium*, framed in the east by another roofed space and to the west by the *praefurnium*. Directly accessed from the street in the north, a small vestibular hall led directly to the central hall. Interestingly, the excavations in the deeper strata under the existing foundations revealed an earlier and smaller edifice composed of several intercommunicating rooms, which could have belonged to a Hellenistic bath. If so, the 2nd-century AD baths of Pella provide us with the best preserved and most distinctive example of a Roman bath which illustrates a continuous evolution from its Hellenistic beginnings as a Greek balaneion, to its developed Imperial phase.

Outdoor spaces – which could have been elaborate gardens (Oulkeroglou 2016, 224–225) – have been located in public baths at Dion, in the area east of the "Baths of the Central Street" and the area south of the bath in Agros Kelepouris, at Thessaloniki (the south side of the large bath complex located in the area of the church of Agios Dimitrios) and in the area of the church of Acheiropoietos. Also, in the area west and east of the large bath, at the site Nesi in Emathia and at Philippoi, in the area south-east of the "Bath of the Glass Workshop insula" (Gounaris and Gounari 2004, 98–100).

With the probable exception of the complex in the area of the church of Agios Dimitrios in Thessaloniki (Vitti 1996, 96–99; 241–243, no. 129), no imperial-type baths have been found in Macedonia so far. Except for the remains of different heated rooms above the Early Christian basilica of St Demetrius hardly anything survived but the size of the area (estimated 5000 m^2) suggests that this was of the so-called imperial type, consisting of a rectangular enclosure and a centrally placed bath block. Although only partially excavated, the bath seems to have been large enough to serve this densely populated area. This, along with the large bathing establishment (6000 m^2) that covered the area where later the Early Christian church of Acheiropoietos was built (Oulkeroglou 2016, 136–139), and the bath that was discovered at Plateia Dioikitiriou (Oulkeroglou 2016, 122–123) near the "praetorium" of the city constitute the most impressive bathing ensembles in Thessaloniki (see Fig. 31).

The geophysical research conducted in the mid-1990s in the south part of the city of Philippoi (Boyd and Provost 2001, 458–459, 507–509) revealed another large bath complex which, based on its size only, could have belonged to the imperial type, organized around a large central court and with two large apses occupying the two narrow sides. The building developed south of the *palaestra* complex that was found south of the forum and under the atrium of the Early Christian Basilica B and despite the interference of a road (*decumanus*) might have comprised a large gymnasium-bath complex. During the Imperial period some of the activities (athletic, intellectual, etc.) that were traditionally held in gymnasia were channeled to baths and the palaestra. Gymnasia, however, as centres for education, arts and athletic exercises, continued to play an important role in urban life. In Macedonia some are known by inscriptions but only one in Amphipolis has till now been securely identified. The gymnasium of Amphipolis (Lazaridou 1995) is located in the south-east sector of the city, between the wall encircling the akropolis and the outer enceinte of the long walls, close to a religious building linked with the worship of Dionysos, and with the theatre of the

city to the north of the gymnasium. This is a building that dates to the last quarter of the 4th century BC and combined a Doric peristyle, *palaestra* (1,600 m^2) and a *xystos*, which covered part of the gymnasium, in which the exercises took place during the winter or in rainy weather, as part of a single large complex (*c*. 17,000 m^2). As in palatial complexes in Macedonia, a series of rooms surrounded the *palaestra* (46.80 m × 36.10 m), among them two baths, different paved rooms, an elliptical shaped room that has been identified as *konisterion* and another room that has been identified as the *elaiothesion* (a storage room for oil, with which the ephebes were coated before their exercise on wrestling). The building had at least three entrances from the paved streets, one of which is of monumental form of a large marble staircase framed by a small *aedicula* dedicated to the cult of Hermes and Hercules. An important gymnasiarchic law from Early Imperial period (Lazaridis 2003, 54), very similar to one found in Beroia (which contains a set of laws that regulate the function of the gymnasium, see Gauthier and Hatzopoulos 1993), shows the continuous importance of the building in the social life of the city. During the Early Imperial period, the east entrance was sealed, and a new entrance was constructed on the north side in the form of a propylon with two Ionic columns and a staircase which led down into the building. The building seems to have been destroyed (similarly to other buildings in Amphipolis) during the Mithridatic wars (88–63 BC) or during the general upheaval recorded for the years 57–56 BC. It was rebuilt during the Early Imperial period probably under Augustus who attained the title *Soter* (Savior) and *Ktistis* (Builder or rather Developer) and continued its function till it was destroyed by fire in Late Antiquity as documented by a 0.40–0.60 m thick destruction layer that has been found inside the west stoa and which consists of tiles from the roof mixed with ash and charcoal. The south entrance with a monumental staircase was replaced by a new entrance in the north wall in the form of a propylon, the exercise areas in the north and west wings were renovated and reorganized and the ephebarchic law of 23 BC was set up in a specially constructed area in the west wing (Rousset 2017).

One more bath calls for a brief mention. This is the large and incredibly well-preserved (to a height of up to 8 m) bathing establishment in Bansko in North Macedonia (see Taseva and Sekulov 2017). Discovered in 1978 on a terraced hillside of the mountain Belasica, it provides good evidence for the use of a natural hydrothermal field in the heating of a bath. The complex in Bansko reflects a category of baths at or near natural hot springs which have a curative function (Yegül 1992, 92–127). The area was and still remains an important centre of thermomineral bathing due to the nearby spring Parilo. It is the availability of naturally heated water that makes the layout and function of the building unique, since the typical bathing concept of heated and non-heated rooms is absent. The building lacks a *praefurnium* and *caldarium–tepidarium* unit in the classical sense. Instead, its central space was occupied by a large thermal pool (10.70 × 8.50 m covering an area of 90.95 m^2) which was framed to the south by a rather small *apodyterion* and a *sudatorium* fed also by the hot waters of the spring. During its period of use from the late 3rd to the late

4th century AD the building experienced at least three construction phases. In the second (mid-3rd century AD) the central heated thermal pool was supplemented with a rectangular *frigidarium* (equipped with a semicircular apse extension and bathtub in its west wall) which functioned more as a leisure hall and a large *apodyterion* that gave access to a renovated bipartite *sudatorium* and to the thermal pool itself. Two apses in the north wall of the thermal pool gave access to individual bathtubs set in the thickness of the external wall of the complex. During the third phase a new hall with a rectangular pool covering a surface of 56.88 m^2 and with a maximum depth of 1.40 m was added to the south of the *frigidarium* along with a new *apodyterion* and *sudatorium*. The floor of the pool was paved with bricks, while the side walls of the pool were covered with mortar. Small semicircular steps in the two corners and four large steps in the south allowed the bathers to immerse themselves in the hot waters. This hall might have functioned as a *frigidarium* since it was located the furthest away from the hot source. As in other thermal baths, the presence of the natural spring itself and the focus on the therapeutical elements of the water led to a rather simple plan based on the assemblage of thermal pools without the sophistication that characterizes other bathing facilities.

11.2.2. Baths in domestic contexts

For most of the domestic baths the usual combination of relatively small-sized heated rooms and a frigidarium was more than sufficient to cover the needs of the owner and his/her family, although in some cases additional heated rooms, a *sudatorium* or a second *caldarium* were added to the plan. Despite their small size, some of these establishments, as for example a series of domestic baths in Thessaloniki (see, for instance, the bath at 90 Kassandrou Street), were lavishly decorated with polychrome mosaics, marble floors and colored plastered walls, carrying messages of status and social hierarchy that clearly surpassed a restricted family circle. Whether these domestic baths were planned from the beginning with the rest of the house or were later additions to a pre-existing unit, is difficult to determine. We can assume that these baths functioned as a place where the household master welcomed his clients or friends with a clear intention to impress.

Many private bathing facilities especially in large villas seem to have eschewed symmetrical plans (see generally De Haan 2010). For instance, the baths that occupied the south part of the extensive domestic complex that is known as "Villa Dionysos" in Dion (Bonini 2006, 343–346) are organized around a central paved marble hall which divided the building into two clearly defined zones: the heated rooms to the south and the leisure rooms (or changing rooms) to the north. To the east and on the main axis of the building a room with an apsed ending held the *piscina frigida* of the complex while a row of shops across the main cardo maximus occupied the opposite west end. The important thing to note here is the separate street entrance through the shops of the west side, which allowed people to enter the baths, without passing through the house, something that could indicate a mixed public and private function

(for a similar phenomenon in Late Roman North Africa, see Maréchal 2016, 128). In addition, the relatively large surface that the bath occupied in relation to the rest of the house might further support the idea of a semi-private bath that was used not only by the residents of the house but also by others, as for instance selected groups of friends and clients of the owner, members of a *collegium* or even the broad public.

The same symmetry can be observed for the private baths in Philippoi (Gounaris and Gounari 2004, 63–65) in the so-called "House of Wild Animals" (Provost and Foschia 2002). The baths (640 m^2) occupied the western part of this large domestic unit in the centre of the city. The large central courtyard with the round tank that occupied the centre of the building gave access to an area (11 × 15 m) with a large colonnaded *piscina frigida* (6.50 × 10.50 m) fed by a fountain on the west wall. This area functioned as the centre of the bath and divided the unit into two distinctive parts, one to the south with rooms for recreation or changing rooms and one to the north with the heated facilities. Because the baths occupied a comparatively large part of the overall building (32 × 20 m), this was originally considered to be some kind of religious or commercial club, a semi-public building and not a residence. But as in the case of the bath of the villa Dionysos in Dion, the size of the establishment and the quality of the construction must not be regarded as something extravagant but rather as an integral part of the prosperous Roman house of the period.

11.2.3. Interior and decoration

The significance of leisure and relaxation as part of bathing was underlined by the addition of lavishly decorative schemes and water features. Interior decoration was an essential ingredient of Roman bathing and can hardly be considered apart from bathing architecture. Only scant remains of the once wealthy interior have been discovered but these are enough to give an impression of the wealth of public baths such as the bath of the "House of Wild Animals" in Philippoi or the "Great Baths" in Dion and the sensory experiences offered to the public. Polychrome marbles, fine mosaics, stucco decoration, gleaming bronze hardware and marble statuary decorated well-lit interiors roofed with vaults and domes creating an ideal environment of luxury and relaxation, a form of escapism into an imaginary world affordable by everyone who could buy their way in (Oulkeroglou 2016, 285–293). The marble veneer of the heated rooms, the polychrome mosaics and the decorated domes (like the glass beads that might have decorated the vault of the *piscina frigida* of the "Baths of the Central Street" in Dion) not only evoked the grandeur of palatial complexes, but they served to "enlarge" the physical experience of an enclosed space. The finest decoration was generally reserved for the main hall/*frigidarium* or the main leisure rooms, but other areas of a bath which were frequented by people – such as the *apodyteria* – could receive special treatment. Sculptural decoration has been traced in 11 cases, among them the group of statues in the "Great Baths" in Dion depicting Asklepios and his family (Pandermalis 1999, 144–151). Architectural fragments from the interior (many of them from baths in Dion) show a preference to the Ionic order. Other pieces of

extravagant decoration were elaborate water displays, *nymphaea* and fountains like the 2nd century AD four apsed tank with a fountain in the middle that furnished the bath complex associated with the sanctuary of Asklepios in Beroia (Psara and Lioulias 2006). In the the baths of the central street in Dion an elaborate *nymphaeum*/fountain articulated by a central semicircular apse and two flanking rectangular *exedrae* fed with water an "*euripus*". This water channel crossed the eastern part of the main hall of the complex. A similar construction is believed to have been identified in the baths in the area of St Demetrius in Thessaloniki (Oulkeroglou 2016, 293).

11.3. Latrines

Lavishly decorated public latrines were often closely linked to baths and sometimes physically attached to them as they used the overflowing water (Neudecker 1994). They could accommodate from five or six persons to dozens and usually consisted of a large open room of square or rectangular shape, often veneered in marble. They were accessible from the street or from the interior of a building such as baths by doors. These had seats arranged around three or four sides of a room or in an exedra and a gutter in the floor underneath the seats. As other architectural features of Roman architecture, the almost similar height of the toilet bench in different sites, imply a certain form of standardization. A brick, stone or more rarely marble built gutter of U-shaped cross-section ran in the base of the toilet bench. This contained water fed by pipes (quite often scented from nearby baths) that might have blocked the odor. Public latrines have been identified in Dion at the complex of the "Central Street" shops (Pandermalis 1989, 29–30), at the "Forum Baths" (Oulkeroglou 2016, 253), at the polygonal building north of the forum (Pandermalis 2002, 417–418), at Philippoi in the *palaestra* (Kaiafa 2008, 530–534) and at the "Balaneion of the Octagon" (Gounaris and Gounari 2004, 81–86).

11.4. Water fountains and krenai

The same improvements in water supply which favoured the development of a bathing culture also ushered in the age of elaborate water fountains (Walker 1987). The large and ornately decorated fountains not only served the needs of the population for water supply but as D.K. Rogers showed (2018), they played a catalytic role in creating an atmosphere of abundance and wealth. The soothing sound of running water and the monumental appearance of many of these fountains created urban loci of social interaction, relaxation and an array of activities. In many cases they contributed to the creation of urban vistas that enhanced the monumental profile of the area. One such case is the two narrow fountains that flanked the *rostra* at the forum of Philippoi, covering the whole length of the north terrace wall. Each fountain (plastered with hydraulic mortar) had a length of 22 m (width 3 m), and they were continuously fed with water by a pipe carried by a small *pila* that stood in the middle of the tank. In

the western fountain a large inscribed plaque that covered the back of the tank and the front of the retaining wall provides information about the sponsor of the project, a certain aedile L. Decimius Bassus who donated 30,000 sesterces (Pilhofer 2009, 271–272, no. 213) for the construction of this elaborate water feature. The shaping of public spaces through such constructions which focus on axiality and symmetry and the creation of impressive façades and architectural compositions was not only an aesthetic trend of the period but also a practical need to create a uniform architectural ensemble without gaps. So many of these constructions apart from their obvious utilitarian value (*i.e.* water supply to fountains) functioned as decorative elements covering empty or unsightly parts, as was for example the retaining wall of the north side of the forum. The same combination of monumentality and functionality is obvious in another imposing fountain of the 3rd century AD that is still visible amidst the modern city of Thessaloniki at the junction of Egnatia and Agios Nikolaos streets (Vitti 2018). The *nymphaeum* is composed by four pedestals with Attic pillar bases placed on a high podium, with a partially preserved inscription. Their typology and date (late Hadrianic – early Antonine period) indicate that they originally belonged to another monumental building in the area and were later reused in the fountain. This, similar to the project of Bassus in Philippoi, is a lavish building, with three sides completely decorated with relief pillars and its main façade turned towards the ancient road, whose surface was found 5.5 m below today's level.

11.5. Epilogue: a culture of water in Macedonia

It is impossible in a short overview to describe and systematically analyze the various baths and water features that have been found in the region. Recent discoveries such as the bath (a large *frigidarium*, a *caldarium* and *tepidarium*) that was excavated at the rural site Bromoneria of Panagia in Kozani (Upper Macedonia) illustrate the wide distribution of such bathing establishments, even in remote rural areas. In the list of buildings, we should also include baths in *mutationes–mansions* (as was probably the bath at the site Arriana in Komotene, see *ADeltion* 28, 1973. Chron B2, 473–476), in Early Christian basilicas and the large complex that was discovered inside the palace of Galerius in Thessaloniki (Athanasiou *et al.* 1999). It is true that so far, no complex has been found that could approach the size and luxury of baths in Italy, North Africa or Asia Minor. On the other hand, the large number of buildings, their wide distribution in different size sites (from domestic complexes to large metropoleis) and the archaeological evidence for lavish decoration clearly show that, as in other areas of the empire, the baths and other water features were an integral part of urban and rural life.

Chapter 12

An architecture of movement and passage: colonnaded streets and gates

Let's now zoom out from the single building and turn to the city itself and movement within it in order to examine another vivid manifestation of Roman urban architecture: the creation of monumental cityscapes. The central role in this process of monumental city building held the notion of "urban armature" (MacDonald 1986, 5), a clearly delineated path through the city that provided spatial unity, urban coherence and unhindered connection between the different city parts, notably between the main gate and the central public space (forum or agora). Colonnades, elaborate pavements, fountains and monuments, public buildings and monumentally articulated junctions and entrances comprised the architectural elements of this urban armature, which gradually over the 2nd and early 3rd centuries AD became the core around which life in many cities was arranged and fashioned (MacDonald 1986, 5–13; Burns 2017).

Archaeological evidence shows that by the mid-2nd century AD the concept of the colonnaded street was firmly established in Macedonia as one of the basic means to architecturally frame streets that were already key thoroughfares (Evangelidis 2020a). In Beroia a colonnaded road of the 2nd century AD seems to have crossed the city from north to south (Evangelidis 2020a, 306). The excavations conducted in the late 60s and early 70s in the centre of the modern city brought to light extensive remains of the main paved roads of the Imperial period with a width reaching 4.50–5 m. Fragments of monolitihic non-fluted columns with Ionic capitals and bases that were found during the excavation across the length of the modern Mitropoleos Street led the excavators to propose the existence of a colonnaded street. In another important urban centre of Macedonia, the provincial capital Thessaloniki, the main paved decumanus that crossed the city from west to east attained a monumental form during the early 4th century AD, when the city became the seat of the emperor Galerius (Vitti 1996, 82–83; Stefanidou-Tiveriou 2006, 172, n. 39). The recent Metro excavations at the centre of the city have brought to light an abundance of evidence concerning this main thoroughfare during the period between the 4th–6th centuries AD when it had the form of a cross-city colonnaded street adorned at its important junctions with tetrapyla or other public monuments (Misailidou-Despotidou 2013; Vasileiadou

and Tzevreni 2020). However, the original idea of this monumental formation of the streets of Thessaloniki might be traced back in the years before the Tetrarchic period and the flow of imperial revenues. As shown by M. Vitti (1996, 82), some of the main streets like the *cardo* that led from the area of the so-called Praetorium to the coast (parallel with the modern Antigonidon Street) might have already had a colonnaded form since the Early Imperial period. The most conclusive evidence however for monumental formation comes from the area south of the Agora, where the famous architectural façade *Las Incantadas* stood (Stefanidou-Tiveriou 2018, 226–228), a monumental double storey façade (of approximated length 22 m) which consisted of four two-sided pillars with carved figures and Corinthian capitals (Sève 2013). Las Incantadas is the name attributed by the Jewish inhabitants of Thessaloniki to the monument which stood in the area till 1869 when it was plundered and moved to Louvre (Fig. 25). The remains could be seen in the courtyard of a Jewish house, until the mid-19th century but they were transported to France by boat in 1864, when, they were sold to the French merchant Miller by the Turkish governor. Recent studies by T. Stefanidou-Tiveriou (2018, 229–230) have shown that the north–south orientated

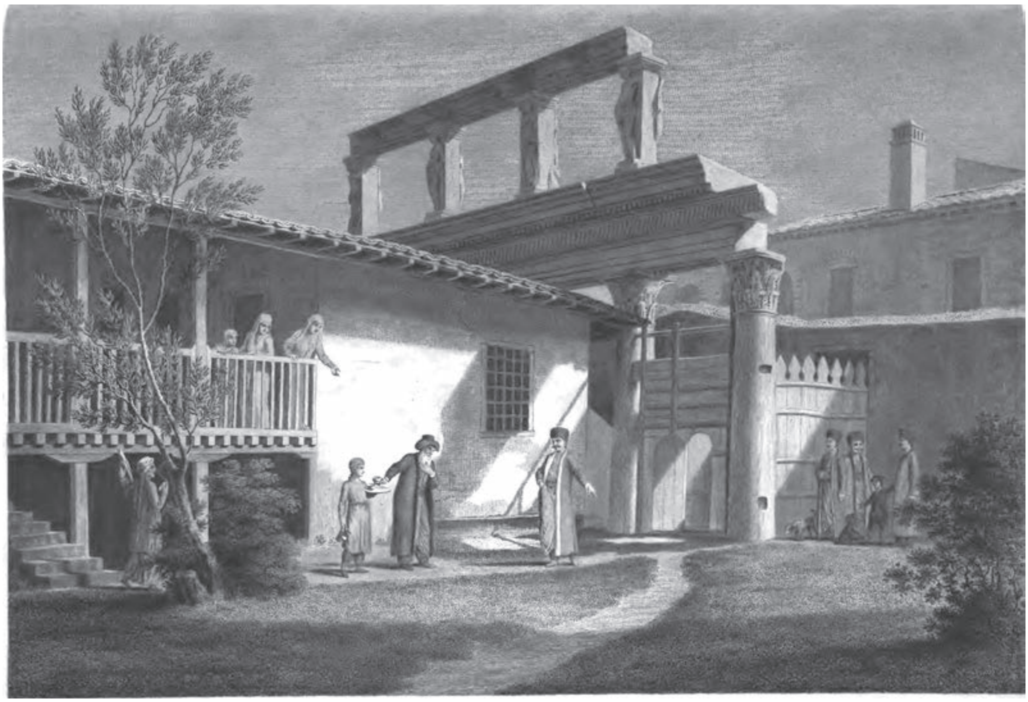

Figure 25. The Las Incantadas monument in Thessaloniki in the early 18th century (source: Wikimedia commons) Stuart, J. and Revett, N. (1794) The Antiquities of Athens Measured and Delineated by James Stuart F.R.S. and F.S.A. and Nicholas Revett, Painters and Architects, vol. III. London, John Nichols.

façade did not only function as an eastern entrance to one of the insulae south of the agora, but that it might have framed a road that led from the main avenue towards the south gate/propylon of the agora. Both in its planning and architectural framing this seems to have been a sophisticated street, a centrepiece of the monumental layout of the lower terrace of Thessaloniki's civic centre, in which the different elements adapted in a fully functional form. This was clearly an architecture that was developed to emphasize the role of key thoroughfares as processional, controlled approaches towards a major public space.

Interestingly this need for regularization and controlled approaches are evident not only in the large civic centres, but in smaller cities too. In a much more developed form, the colonnaded street appears in the closely packed environment of the lower city of Edessa (Evangelidis 2020a, 308). There, the main paved street (the width of the paved road is 4 m) leading from the south gate towards the interior of the city (a segment of 82 m has been discovered) was flanked by porticoes (width of the stoas 5.5 m) which had a transitional role demarcating public (the street) from private zones (the habitation quarters that lay directly behind the stoas), but also helping the movement between the two spheres. The stoas made from columns and pillars (many of them in second use) were very reminiscent of a similar arrangement in Stobi, where the 4th-century AD colonnaded "Via Sacra" led from the north-west gate to the Episcopal Centre (Crawford 1990, 117–118). The excavated remains in Edessa date to Late Antiquity (4th–5th century AD). However, as noticed by the excavator A. Chrysostomou (2001a, 304), there is evidence to indicate that the original design of the street as a colonnaded thoroughfare can be traced earlier to the early 2nd century AD.

12.1. An architecture of passage: gates and arches

Armatures though were not only defined by an architecture of movement, but also by an architecture of passage. In the composition of the city the main axis was frequently marked (or terminated) by a prominent building or monument, often in the form of an arch or monumental gate (Gregory and Mills 1984, 427). Either as free-standing features or as entrances to buildings or compounds, they played an important demarcating role within the fabric of the Imperial period city, which was characterized by an increasing compartmentalization (Evangelidis 2014, 338). A typical example of arches as independent features can be found in Philippoi (Fig. 26) where two large double bay arches marked the section of the main decumanus that divided the highly raised plateau of Area Sacra from the main square of the forum (Sève 1979, 630–631). The street (which is conventionally called "Via Egnatia") was a 600 m long cross-city colonnaded thoroughfare (Provost and Boyd 2003) which ran from the "Western Gate" to the east towards the "Gate of Neapolis", passing through the forum, a unit that clearly stood apart from the rest of the city. The columnar façades of the public buildings and the houses that framed its course (especially to the east of the forum) created the effect of a colonnaded axis. A parallel road that ran to the

south of the forum and divided it from other major public buildings of the Roman city like the palaestra or the macellum might also have had a colonnaded form since the 2nd century AD.

We can find many similar qualities in Thasos, where a triple-bay arch (16.85 m long, 9.80 tall, 2.06 wide; Marc 1993, 585; Grandjean and Salviat 2000, 144–147) marked the starting (or ending) point of a large, paved street that crossed the city from the south-west towards the agora (Fig. 26), an area that experienced radical reorganization over the Imperial period (Evangelidis 2010, 95–103). Despite the reference to the Severi in the dedicatory inscription (carved in the entablature, see IG XII 8, 382), the arch (conventionally called *Arc de Caracalla*), as noticed by J.Y.Marc (1993, 588), seems to have been part of a large project that monumentalized the main access to the agora of the city and can actually be traced back to the middle of the 2nd century AD. Architecturally, the monument in Thasos is a rather simple construction, similar to other arches across the Roman world with the only exception that its central part towered over the lateral. The monument was not overtly decorated, and its openings were supported by monolithic pedestals bearing composite Corinthian capitals (Marc 1993, 588).

Much earlier than the arches in Philippoi and Thasos, the "Golden Gate" in Thessaloniki (Vitti 1996, 170–171) was a single-span arch that was probably built sometime between the beginning of the 1st century AD and the mid-2nd century AD. The monument is only known by the drawings and description of the archaeologist Léon Heuzey and the architect Honoré Daumet who stayed and mapped Thessaloniki in 1861 as part of the French archeological expedition to Macedonia (Fig. 27). Based on their drawing we reconstruct the monument as a single-span arch with a plain stone archway set in a facing of pdeudoisodomic system. The straight long entablature was decorated with bucrania and garlands while two reliefs of horsemen were carved on either side of the pillars of the gate. The two horsemen have been regarded as a reference to the Dioscuri, whose worship was widespread in Thessaloniki, but other interpretations have been proposed, among them that of I. Touratsoglou, who argued that the two horsemen were the winners (and saviours of the city) of the Battle of Philippoi, Marc Anthony and Octavian to whom the inscription IG X 2.1. 125 [ἡ πόλις

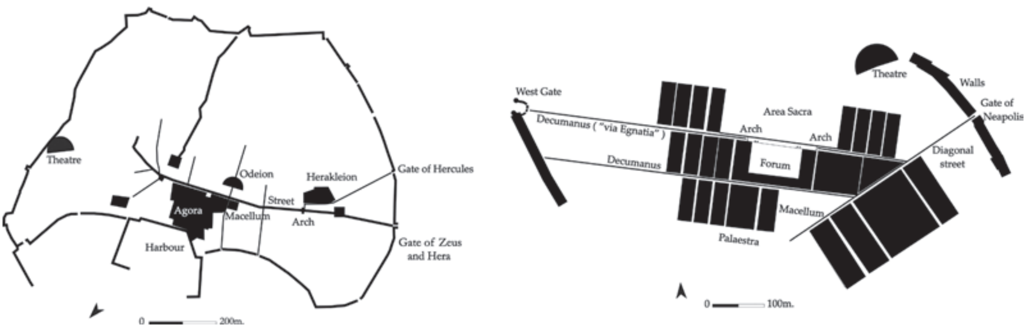

Figure 26. Thasos and Philippoi. The formation of the main roads (digital drawing: author).

Figure 27. The Golden Gate in Thessaloniki (source: Wikimedia commons) Heuzey, L.A. (1876) 1831–1922: Mission archéologique de Macédoine. par Léon Heuzey et H. Daumet. Paris, Planches)

θεοῖς σωτῆρ]σιν? ἀνέθηκεν] refers. According to I. Touratsoglou the monument was built around AD 38–39, on the 80th anniversary of granting the city with the privileged status of *civitas libera* for the support it provided to M. Anthony and Octavian. On the right inner side of the gate, an early 1st-century AD inscription (today in the British Museum) mentioning the names of six *politarchai* is one of the oldest references to this important local office (Nigdelis 2005, 28). The monument was built to mark the main entrance of the city from the west, the route that the main avenue of the city follows until today. During the 3rd century AD, the arch lost its individual character, and it was incorporated in the west walls of the city, becoming the "Golden Gate" (reminiscent of the "Golden Gate" in Constantinople) mentioned in the Byzantine and Ottoman sources, the gate through which officials ceremonially entered the city. This unique monument was demolished in 1874 by the Ottoman authorities to open additional space for the plague-infested city. If the early date is correct, then the arch is one of the earliest signs of such Italian-style features in the urban landscape of Roman Macedonia.

Arches such the ones in Thessaloniki or Thasos clearly played an important demarcating role by assigning value to movement through the different parts of the civic centre

(Thomas 2007, 122). This is evident not only in urban contexts but quite often outside the walls of the cities, where free-standing triumphal and commemorative arches astride major roads. A very characteristic example of this category is the free-standing single-span arch that was found 2 km outside the walls of the Roman colony of Philippoi (Karadedos and Nikolaidou-Patera 2006). The monument placed on Via Egnatia and very close to the riverbanks of Gangitis River marked either the *pomerium* (chora) of the colony of Philippoi or the site of the famous battle against Brutus and Casssius (traces of the fortifications of Brutus and Cassius' camps have been traced 250 m from the site of the arch). Architecturally, the arch was a rather simple monument, made in local white marble and decorated with pilasters crowned by Corinthian capitals. On the side looking towards the city traces on the attic and entablature of the monument indicate the existence of a large inscription in bronze letters.

An elaborate form of arch is the civic tetrapyla which generally appear as large monuments marking the intersection of streets (Ball 2000, 273–284). One of the best examples of this type in Greece and the eastern empire in general is the so called "*Arch of Galerius*" which we have already encountered in Chapter 7.1 examining the palatial complex of Gaius Galerius Valerius Maximianus in Thessaloniki (Laubscher 1975). Adjoined by colonnaded roads, the tetrapylon formed the centrepiece of an imperial complex and it was built to provide a focal point at the intersection of two major arteries of the city. The monument was originally built as an eight-pillared gateway that formed a triple arch. The central arch measures 9.7 × 12.5 m, with the smaller arches on each side 4.8 × 6.5 m. Today only the western part of the monument survives (see Fig. 13): the four eastern pillars and the southern pillar of the western side have been lost. Its pillars were constructed of rubble, faced with brick and decorated with panels of marble reliefs (divided into four horizontal piers, and separated by decorative moldings) that depict scenes commemorating Galerius's victory over the Persians in AD 298 (Pond-Rothman 1975; 1977). Other scenes depict the imperial family offering a sacrifice and the crowning of the tetrarchs by the personification of Victory. Four large niches – two of which remain *in situ* – were placed above the pillars of the central passageway. These may have held statues of the Tetrarchs, or even of their leading divinities, Jupiter, Hercules, Mars and Virtus.

The monument and its elaborate relief decoration, the full description of which is beyond the scope of this book, clearly conveyed messages about the power and stability of the Tetrarchic system. The most important scenes, such as the one depicted in the third panel of the northern side of the southern pillar, where the seated Diocletian and Maximinian are flanked by their Caesars, Constantius and Galerius, decorate the interior of the central archway, leading the passenger through the arch in the direction of the palace and the Rotunda which provided the city with its unique character as an imperial centre.

More than any other single architectural feature Roman-style monumental arches clearly echo the architectural language of imperial Rome and to a certain degree – linked as they were with Roman military triumphs – can be seen as symbols of

Roman or imperial power. For all their crudities, the arches of the Macedonian cities embody everything that was vigorous in contemporary cityscapes. One of these was visual prominence (MacDonald 1986, 32). The Thasian arch for instance was clearly a monument that was meant to be seen from a distance, something that probably explains the height of the central part.

The monumental scenographic aspect of this architecture of passage can be seen not only in arches and tetrapyla but also in more conventional propyla of public spaces. In Maroneia in coastal Thrace, the so-called "Hadrianic propylon", largely built of marble and dressed stones, illustrates what was essentially the typical type of monumental entrance to a large civic space (Kokkotaki 2003, 13–16). The construction of this elaborate monument is linked with the visit of the emperor Hadian to the city on his way back to Athens from Minor Asia sometime around AD 129–131; a visit which is also witnessed by the dedication of a large statue by the *demos*. Although the construction of monuments or the dedication of statues do not necessarily imply the actual presence of the emperor (in most cases they must have been completed years after the original visit), they still illustrate the kind of reaction that the rumour of an imperial visit may have had on local societies who competed for favour and attention. This was a relatively large construction comprised by three vaulted roofed passages leading to a public space which could have been the agora of the city (Fig. 28).

Nevertheless, the formation of an armature of movement must not only be seen in relation to the addition of stoas or elaborate gates (Evangelidis 2020a, 311–312).

Figure 28. The 2nd-century AD propylon in Maroneia (photo: author).

Figure 29. The monument with the shields in Dion (photo: author).

Reference to the history of the city through monuments of the past that were exhibited along the main thoroughfares could create another, very distinctive form of street monumentality. In the Roman colony of Dion, for instance, the trend is reflected in the reuse along the city's main thoroughfare of the salvaged relic of a frieze (Fig. 29) coming from an old building or monument. In its original position it decorated the façade (and possibly the rear part) of a large building possibly of the Hellenistic age identified as *bouleuterion*. The building was of the Doric order (some of its triglyphs were found incorporated in the basilica) and the frieze was an additional element, a local peculiarity which appears also in other monuments in Macedonia such as the Macedonian tombs. The frieze, made of limestone depicting cuirasses and shields, was inserted into the outer face of the terrace wall of one of the large public buildings (basilica) that framed the paved main street crossing the city from east to west (Christodoulou 2007). The monument, one of the few that survived from the pre-Roman city, created strong connotations of the Macedonian kingdom which at the time of the Severan rebuilding of Dion held a special role in imperial ideology (Evangelidis 2018, 424).

It is exactly in the use of such monuments along the main roads that someone can see the city's responses to the properties of space (like urban coherence and visual

unity) that characterized much of the contemporary architecture. By controlling traffic and movement architecturally articulated streets and imposing gates – arches not only produced urban environments more cohesive than in previous periods, but also created an awareness of movement between the different city regions, each one of which had its own special sociocultural meaning. The compartmentalization of the city gives an impression of a hierarchized urban space and indicates the existence of strong notions about where each citizen or visitor could be placed or move within the city. Notions about social standing, rank (and differentiation) are especially visible in the domestic sphere which brings us to the next chapter, where we will examine houses in urban and peri-urban areas.

Chapter 13

Housing in urban and peri-urban contexts

It has long been recognized that a better understanding of the human *habitus* requires the study of domestic remains which reflect not only the social, economic and cultural status of the owner but often reveal much about the layout of the city, the use of space and demography. For the domestic architecture of the Aegean world, it was the Hellenistic period that brought radical changes in the form and structure of private space (Papaioannou 2002; Zarmakoupi 2018). Houses became substantially bigger and more open, including elaborate courts and rooms for leisure or guest reception, where the owner could display signs of wealth and status. The egalitarian *ethos* – as described by J. Bintliff (2012, 337) – of the modest in size and decoration houses of the Classical period gave its place to a sense of lavishness and a need for social display. Changes in the accessibility of the indoor spaces and the communication between the different units of the house (Nevett 2002, 84) have been regarded as reflecting new social habits and a new openness in all levels of social interaction (Hales 2003, 109–123).

In this respect, Hellenistic Macedonia has provided some excellent examples of lavish urban domestic architecture, exemplified in the large urban mansions in Pella, like the "House of Dionysos" or the "House of Helen" (both covering an area of more than 2000 m^2); these were small palatial complexes proper, presumably the private *palazzi* of the king's friends (*hetairoi*) (Akamatis 2011, 398–9). Their multiple reception halls (*andrones*) attest to an elite lifestyle of feasting and social display. But these were the exceptions rather than the rule.

For the rest of the cities, we assume that the dominant plan for the general standard of housing was the Greek courtyard house with some excellent examples discovered in Pella itself like the "Plasterwork House" (Akamatis 2011, 398) or a number of houses in Amphipolis (Malamidou 1997, 839–840; Malama and Salonikios 2002). Different layouts like the houses with veranda (porch) in Petres in Florina and Vergina (Aigai), where a Late Hellenistic house combined the peristyle internal colonnade style with an outward facing veranda on its north side next to the entrance (Tsigarida 1992, 85–89), or the simple compact houses like the ones in Vardarski rid (Gortynia?) in North Macedonia (Blazevska and Slamkov 2010) with no central colonnaded court, may indicate the existence of local variants better suited to the colder weather conditions. The Hellenistic houses that have been discovered at the Agios Pandeleimonas hill in

Florina (Lilimpaki-Akamati 1995, 578–579), reflect the normal domestic architecture of the period of cities and towns that did not have the glamour of the large urban centres. Roads crossing at right angles separated the building blocks and there were cobbled pavements and stone steps. Three or four houses were to be found on each block with hearths, storage and workshop areas, and floors covered by either stone slabs, pieces of tile or earth. Pithoi were found in the storage areas containing cereal seeds and ironworking was confirmed within the workshop areas. Here one can get some idea of the domestic local architecture outside the world of the large urban residences. Very illustrative are the houses discovered in the small unidentified Late Classical–Hellenistic town (modern Ossa) on the borders of ancient Mygdonia and Bisaltia. There, during the early 1990s rescue excavations brought to light the basements of houses, used for the storage of provisions in pithoi and as workspaces, as indicated by the presence of hand mills and ovens. There was clear evidence that the living areas were on the upper floors, where there had been looms and small family shrines (Mangafa 1992).

13.1. Houses in the Imperial period

The study of Imperial period domestic architecture in Macedonia poses numerous challenges. Many issues, such as those related to the distribution of houses in the city grid or the density of occupation, have not yet been addressed properly. Moreover, archaeological documentation of domestic architecture is not without problems. A serious gap in our knowledge is the lack of surviving houses of the Late Hellenistic–Early Imperial period and the quite often fragmented picture of excavated domestic contexts, especially in cities like Thessaloniki or Beroia, where habitation continued to modern times. For these sites we are mostly dependent on what we learn from rescue excavations with all the shortcomings that their records entails. Unavoidably, much emphasis has been placed on elite residences, while those of the poor are less well represented (and understood) in the archaeological record. However, recent discoveries in Demetrias (Batziou-Efstathiou 2001–2004) reveal the scale of social differentiation and we can imagine landscapes where next to the great urban mansions, sheds made from perishable materials occupied empty spaces.

The Middle Roman–Late Roman period is well represented in terms of domestic architecture and some very impressive examples in size and decoration have been discovered in different urban contexts from Thessaloniki to Beroia and Thasos. On the contrary, the Late Hellenistic–Early Roman (roughly the period till the mid-1st century AD) is less archaeologically visible. Two houses from this early period are extremely interesting due to their distinctively Italian features. The first, a large house in Mieza (in the Valavani field: Allamani and Misailidou 1992, 208–212) is one of the few cases where reliably dated Italian building features have been found in Macedonia. The layout is based on a central peristyle court with a colonnade on three sides (north, west and south) and double storey residential units around it. In its west

wing though it had a typically Italian *atrium* style court with an *impluvium* (a shallow rectangular rainwater basin in the middle of the *atrium*). The *atrium* seems to have been added sometime around the end of the 1st century BC to the central core of the house which dates to the Hellenistic period (2nd century BC). During the heyday of the building in the 1st century AD, the walls were built in *opus reticulatum* (a form of brickwork of diamond-shaped bricks) and the floors were tessellated with large mosaic cubes and *opus signinum* (mortar with crushed brick), a technique frequent in Italy but rare in the eastern part of the empire (Parcharidou-Anagnostou 2011, 700). The second house, organized around a tetrastyle *atrium* with an *impluvium* decorated with a mosaic floor, which consists of small asymmetric marble pieces of white and grey colour arranged in five zones, has been discovered in Nea Potidaia, the location of the Roman colony of Kassandreia (Misailidou-Despotidou and Germenis 2008). Several rooms, among them a reception hall with a floor made of stone slabs and another room with a rectangular fountain, opened through a stoa to the central court. The entrance to the house lies on the east side through a long entrance passage flanked on either side by rooms. Drains that lie under the walls and the floors of the building carry the water outside it to the south-east. The house had a long lifespan from the 1st century BC to the late 3rd century AD, when thick layers of debris with significant findings (pottery, stamped amphora handles and coins) are associated with the last use of the building and the Gothic invasion. Excavation data, however, indicate the possibility that the house was older, a Hellenistic mansion which was, after the foundation of the colony and the establishment of Italian settlers, remodeled to an *atrium* house. These houses represent something new in local domestic architecture and analogies have been sought with Italy. With their Italian-style decoration and building techniques they have been thought to reflect the Italian origins of their owners. How much of this represents direct influence from Italy or just individual preferences (although these two could intermingle) remains unknown.

Throughout the Imperial period and right down to Late Antiquity the regular middle upper-class house in Macedonia continued to be the traditional *oikia* (Papaioannou 2010a), an urban mansion focused on one or more inner light sources which could have taken the form of a colonnaded court. Roman style *atria* (the term is quite often indiscriminately used to generally describe the court) with four columns framing an *impluvium* under a central narrow opening in the roof are rare (with the exception of the Roman colony of Dion) but it is clear that the two types fused together in the inward-looking courtyard house which is characteristic for the period. As elsewhere, with the passage of time the distinction between Roman and Hellenistic types of houses became more and more blurred (Papaioannou 2007). Different spaces, bedrooms and residential units, dining and reception rooms, recesses and *exedrae* but also kitchens, service rooms and storage spaces opened around these courts. Although the ideal of the house was an axial plan, a vista running from the front door to the *triclinium*, the layout varied greatly, based on the local terrain conditions or the preferences of the owner and the architect. Generalizations are difficult to make but the

basic features were essentially the same: one or more courtyards with a tank or well, a large reception room (or more), which conventionally is called a *triclinium*, lavish decoration with marble walls or mosaics, bath facilities, central heating in some cases and a marked taste for lavish decoration expressed through marble walls, mosaics and statues. The dominance (especially) of the *triclinium* as the focus of domestic architecture design (see Chapter 16) has been linked to the emergence of a highly stratified society (Nielsen 1998; Dunbabin 2003)

The housing of a major city of the Middle and Late Roman period is best studied in Dion (Fig. 30), largely rebuilt on new building standards during the late 2nd–early 3rd century AD. One of the most significant monuments in this category is the so-called "Villa of Dionysos" (Bonini 2006, 343; Zarmakoupi 2018, 289–290). This was a large wealthy residence occupying the greatest part of an elongated rectangular insula to the east of the forum and the main *cardo maximus*. Based on its striking size and the presence of Dionysos in its decoration, it was originally believed that it might have been the seat of a religious association linked with the cult of the god. The whole building developed on a longitudinal plan with the main residential units and reception rooms grouped around three tetrastyle paved courts which communicated with

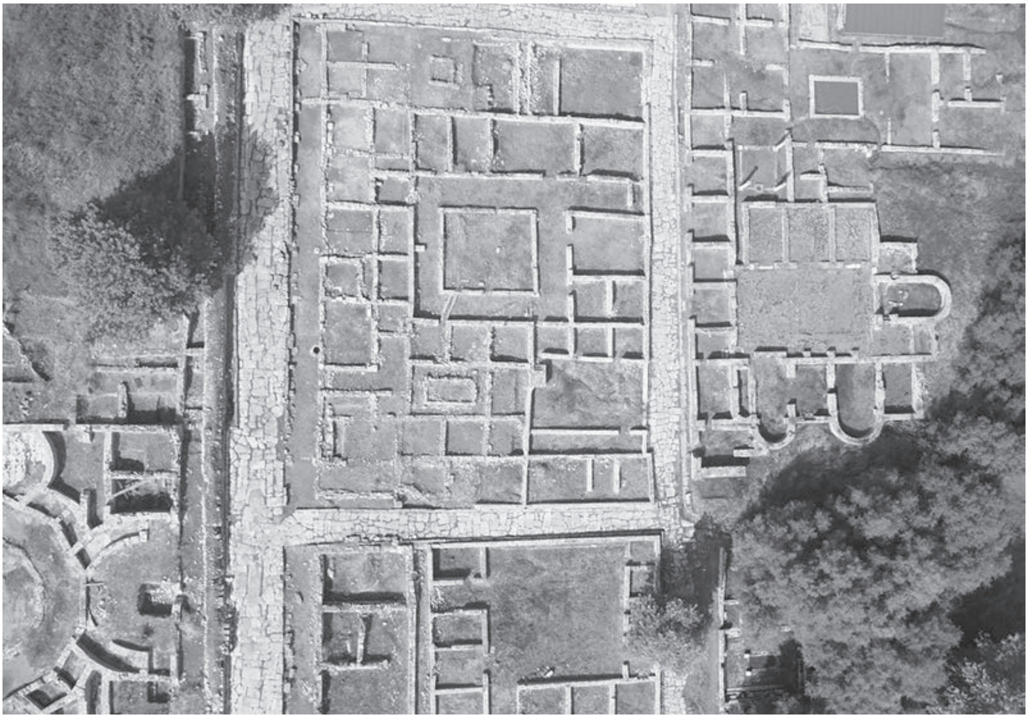

Figure 30. Late Roman residential insulae in Dion, to the north of the Forum (source: E. Papagianni, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki).

one another through corridors (Fig. 31). Two more twelve-column peristyle courts to the north seem to have belonged to the part of the house that hosted service facilities, since storage vessels and clay ovens have been found in a number of rectangular rooms that opened to one of the two courts. The two central tetrastyle paved *atria* (both with a tank/*impluvium* in the middle) gave access to some splendidly decorated rooms arranged along the east part of the house. The largest of all was a rectangular room of almost 100 m² to the east of the northern atrium that featured a splendid mosaic of Dionysos (Pandermalis 1987; 1999, 153–154) on a chariot surrounded by a marine *thiasos*. A second hall with an apse which has been interpreted as a domestic temple featured another mosaic depicting Dionysos (seated on a throne holding a sceptre) opened to the axis of the second, southern court (Pandermalis 1999, 184). Other rooms were grouped around the two main courts in the centre of the complex and a relatively large bath was added at a lower level to the south behind a series of shops that occupied the western frontage. Due to its size, it remains unclear if this was solely for use by the owner (see Chapter 11.2). The architectural decoration is striking, with mosaics of excellent quality (such as the Medusa head found in the northern peristyle), marble revetments, fragments of sculpture (portrait busts of Faustina the younger and Agrippina, a marble Nike of the Berlin type, statues of philosophers and an excellent marble statuette of Dionysos holding a *cornucopia* (see Pandermalis 1999, 173) and bronze fittings of beds (imitating horse heads).

Other Middle Roman imperial houses of the same lavish character but less elaborate have been excavated in Dion; the "House of Athena" (Kotsaki 2016, 28–35), with two tetrastyle *atria* and relatively sizeable rooms next to the eastern part of the circuit of the city falls within the same general category as the "Villa Dionysos" though the size is much smaller. A similar layout follows the "House of Zosas" (named after the inscription ΕΥΤΥΧΙ ΖΩΣΑ inscribed in one of its mosaics) in the south-east sector of the city (Kotsaki 2016, 41–51). A small, cobbled road separates the house from another house with a single *atrium* where the marble slabs of a table and three table legs were recovered. One of the latter represented Dionysos reposing, another Leda and the swan (which gave the house its name), while the third was a hybrid form with the head and feet of a lion (Pandermalis 1993, 195–197; Pandermalis 2016, 132).

In the other well-studied Roman colony of Macedonia, that of Philippoi (Zarmakoupi 2018, 283–286), the excavated houses offer a vivid glimpse of elite urban residences in Macedonia from the mid-2nd to the late 6th century AD. One of the most significant monuments in this respect is the so called "Maison de Fauves" or "House of the Wild Animals" (Fig. 31), a wealthy house occupying the greater part of a rectangular insula to the south of the city where more space than in the crowded centre was available (Provost and Tassignon 2002). The house was organized in two units arranged symmetrically to the east and west of the central court (Bonini 2006, 379–380; Wurmser 2008, 460–462). The residential spaces and the large apsidal *triclinium* with the circular and rectangular niches lay to the east of the court, while a large bath that featured a lavishly decorated open door pool/fountain to the west (see

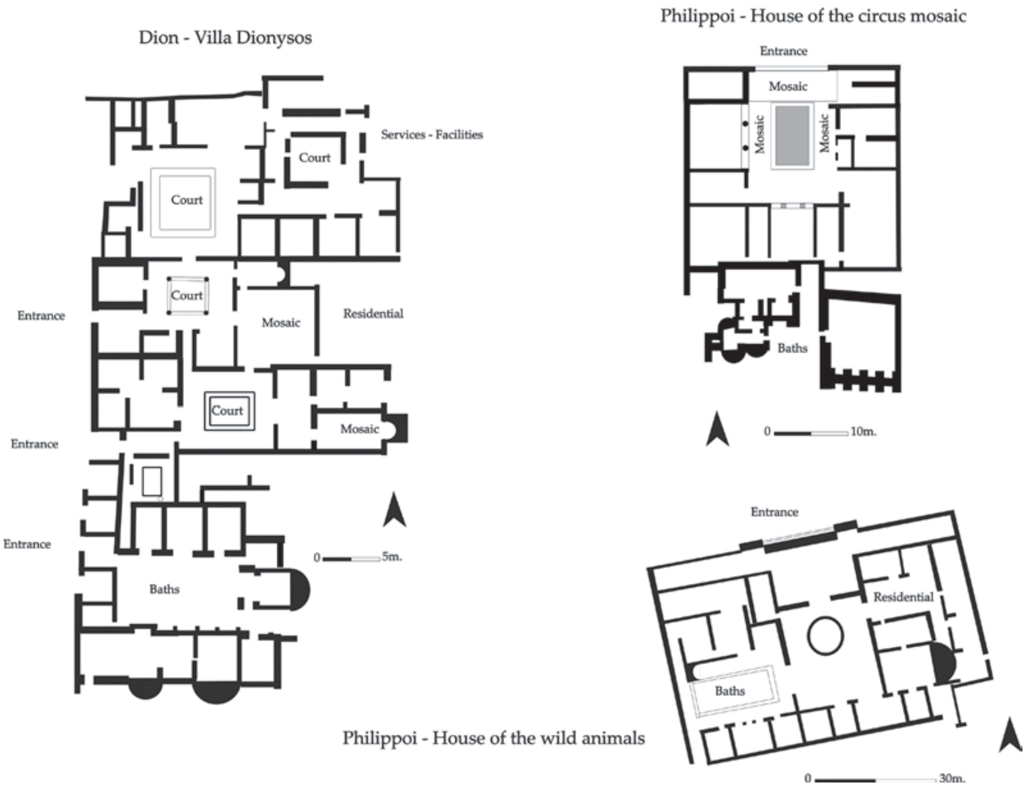

Figure 31. Villa Dionysos in Dion. House of the Circus Mosaic and House of Wild Animals in Philippoi (digital drawing author). Villa Dionysos based on Bonini 2006, 378. House of Wild Animals: BCH 104 (1980) 700, fig. 1. House of the Circus mosaic: Bonini 2006, 346.

Chapter 11.2). The monumental staircase of the entrance, the distyle *in antis* door, the polychrome mosaic of the wild animals fight (Gounari 2010, 28) that decorated the reception hall, the marble-revetted apse with the niches and the impressive outdoor pool, constantly fed with water by a fountain, attest to a domestic architecture of elegance, sophistication and grandeur (the house was originally interpreted as a public bath). Another Middle Roman house is the so-called "House of the Circus Mosaic" (Zarmakoupi 2018, 283–284) which was discovered south of the diagonal street that crosses the city from west to east (Gounaris 2003a; 2008). The plan is essentially that of a typical Late Hellenistic house with the rooms arranged around a central paved court with a shallow basin, an echo presumably of the plan of the *atrium* house (Fig. 31). A large room with two Ionic pillars opened off the middle of the south side on the axis of the house, opposite the central entrance which had the form of a double door leading from the street directly to the court through a magnificent mosaic depicting the *circus* (Gounaris 2003b; Gounari 2010, 29), the *spina* of the *circus* with

its many details and at least five *quadrigae* (four horses chariots) representing several stages of the race.

Several other houses of the same general character have been identified at other cities. A good example that exemplifies much about the domestic architecture of the period comes from a city that has produced relatively little Roman material, Amphipolis (Wurmser 2008, 463–465). The so-called "Roman villa" outside the south wall of the Roman akropolis (Zarmakoupi 2018, 278–279) is organized around a central open marble paved court with a well. Large reception halls decorated with excellent mosaic floors (as the one depicting the story of Poseidon with Amymone) and a semicircular space looked across splendidly decorated stoas (among them one with a mosaic featuring the abduction of Europa by Zeus) on to the central court (Stikas 1973; 1975; Parcharidou-Anagnostou 2011, 701–702). More recently, though, the identification with a house has been cast in doubt and the theory that this was part of a large public building has been put forward (Koukouli-Chrysanthaki 2011a, 434)

In Stobi, a number of large peristyle houses (some of them large enough to cover a whole insula) with double courtyards, triclinia and fine mosaics, like the "House of Peristeria" or the "House of Parthenios", are of Early Christian date (4th–6th centuries AD) but they all seem to have replaced older residences of the 1st or the 2nd century AD. Such is the case with the wealthy "Casa Romana", located in the north-eastern part of the town, close to the eastern defensive wall from which it is separated by a small street (Wiseman and Mano-Zissi 1973, 394–397; 1974, 126–128). The house (only partially excavated during the 1970s) displays the same compact layout with rooms around a central court with a *compluvium* style roof (the narrow unroofed opening over the atrium). Among its characteristic motifs it suffices to note the fresco decoration of the walls which imitated Ionic pillars. In another house with a remarkably long period of use from the 1st to the 6th century AD, the "Domus Fullonica" (or "House GR"), a group of rooms have been interpreted as *gynaikonitis*, a separate complex which allowed the female family members to perform their duties away from onlookers in the main peristyle. Here someone can see the early appearance of the apsidal dining room (including a semicircular *stibadium* couch) which is evident in all houses in Stobi during the Late Roman period (Gerasimovska 2012, 102).

Although not always as instructive as houses excavated at sites that have remained uninhabited over the centuries like Dion, Philippoi or Stobi, Thessaloniki, has provided rich evidence for domestic architecture of the late Middle Roman–early Late Roman period. Most of the surviving remains date from the 4th–late 6th century AD but they seem to reproduce older forms and layouts that were established during the Middle Roman period or even before that. Large *villae urbanae* of the 3rd–5th centuries AD with bathhouses, lavish decoration with polychrome mosaics (Asimakopoulou-Atzaka 2011) and more than one *triclinia* (quite often with the characteristic for the period curvilinear form) have been excavated at different places (Fig. 32) around the city (Karagianni 2012, 71). There is a large number of sites that have yielded considerable remains (mostly elaborately decorated *triclinia*) of Late Roman domestic architecture:

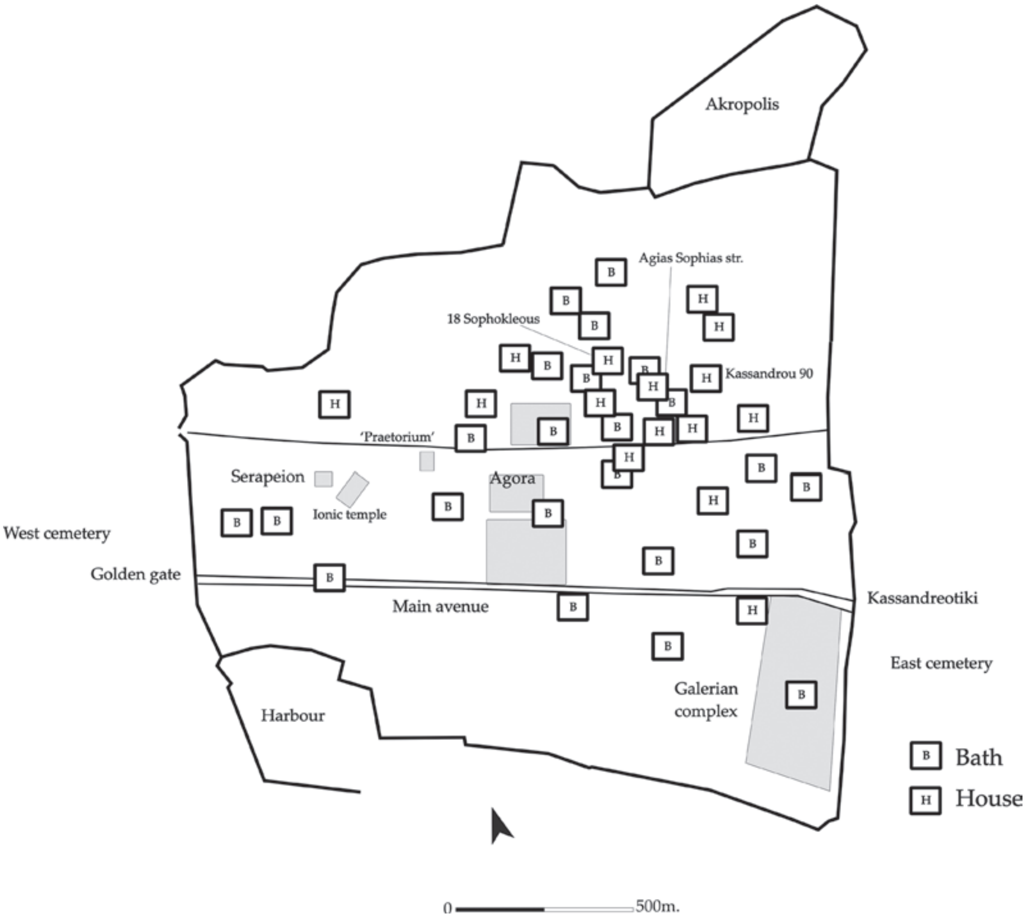

Figure 32. Houses and baths in Thessaloniki (digital drawing author).

Agias Sophias 75, Profiti Ilia 5, Ioulianou 15, Arrianou and Kassandrou 68 to name only some of the most substantial (Karydas 1995; Karagianni 2012, 73).

A large 4th–5th century AD house (750–1000 m²) with an atrium and two triclinia at 18–20 Sophokleous Street (Fig. 32) is a characteristic example (Karydas 1996a; 1996b): this was a large urban house integrated into the Hippodamian street grid occupying half the width of the insula. As the rest of the houses that were built in the relatively uninhabited north-east sector of the city where there was plenty of room for expansion, it was built on a terrace/embankment levelling the natural southward fall of the ground. Here one can see a very skilful exploitation of the terrain to produce lively impressive vistas. Its elaborate decoration included polychrome mosaic floors, numerous coloured fragments of frescoes with various decorative motifs, including human figures. All the villas of the area offered magnificent views over

the sea with the reception halls opening to the south (Karydas 2000, 259–272). It is commonly accepted that what boosted this building frenzy of the 4th century AD was the upgrade of Thessaloniki into a seat of the imperial government by Galerius and the emergence of a prosperous middle upper class of the imperial court. If, however the domestic remains of the Early Christian period provide a vivid glimpse of the prosperity of the period, the remains dating to the 2nd–3rd centuries AD offer not a dissimilar picture. Although fragmentary, the remains of Early Imperial housing from Thessaloniki tell the story of a vibrant domestic architecture that shaped the newly emergent Christian architectural repertoire.

Rescue excavations at different sites in the centre of the modern city have shown that lavish houses of considerable sizes seem to have dotted the landscape well before the Late Roman–Early Christian period. The palace of Galerius itself had been built over remains of luxurious 1st–3rd century AD houses with marble and mosaic floors (Asimakopoulou-Atzaka 2011, 374–375) which appear to have been destroyed by fire (Karamberi and Christodoulidou 1997, 393–400). Of the many partially preserved Middle Roman houses that have been found over the years one of the most complete is the house that has been discovered at Agia Sophia Street in the northern part of the city. As in many other contexts the evidence indicates a long period of occupation, from the Hellenistic to the Early Byzantine period (Karydas 1995). The 4th-century AD phase (which seems to follow an earlier 2nd-century AD plan) includes an apsidal *triclinium*, a *tribelum* of Ionic columns, a main courtyard with an *impluvium* around which three rooms with basements opened. Swastikas and other geometric motifs decorate the mosaic floor in the *triclinium*. The complex included a small workshop of the 3rd century AD. Much of the complex was inhabited until the 7th century AD, when it was damaged by an earthquake(s). Habitation phases from the 3rd to the 7th century AD were also encountered on the building plot at 90 Kassandrou Street (Makropoulou and Tzitzibasi 1993, 355–360). The rescue excavations brought to light a large section of a 3rd–4th century AD house with mosaic floors, wall paintings, and a small bath: part of a *frigidarium* decorated with marble tiles, *tepidarium* and *praefurnium* have been found in the south-east corner of the house, together with traces of another house, of the same period, and just east of the first. The remains discovered at 93 Agiou Demetriou and Pelopos Street belonged to another large house of the 2nd–3rd century AD. The walls bore traces of painted decoration. Based on pottery evidence the house was destroyed in *c.* AD 320. Although the destruction layer included Late Hellenistic pottery fragments and *terra sigillata* of the 1st century BC–1st century AD, no traces of a Hellenistic building were found (Karydas 2009, 139). Similarly, in the area near the church of Agia Sophia, the earliest Roman phase of the 2nd-century AD house was levelled to build a large *villa urbana* with a bathhouse. Fragments of non-figural wall paintings were found, along with a marble portable altar with the depiction of a lion and a figurine of a seated human male (2nd century AD). Destroyed by earthquake, the villa was replaced in the 5th century AD by buildings that probably were associated with the new episcopal palace of the city.

Clustered beside the main streets of the city (Grandjean 1988), the houses of Thasos are also built around peristyle courtyards and in cases show strong signs of continuity from the Late Classical – Hellenistic period (Samartzidou 1987, 438) until Early Christian times (Baldini-Lippolis 2001, 306–307). Dense occupation has been verified in the area situated between the sanctuary Herakleion and the ancient agora, where remains of peristyle type houses of the Imperial period were identified, with signs of repairs (Koukouli-Chrysanthaki 1978). Characteristic is one house dated to the Imperial period that was excavated during the late 1980s near the agora. This displays the known open interior courtyard layout with rooms decorated with mosaic floors (to the north-west and south) arranged around it, a central hearth, and an underground built drain at the south-east side. A considerable part of the paving of the yard is preserved, including the doorway and threshold. The finds include large amounts of Roman pottery, 80 bronze Roman and Late Roman coins, a marble female head and part of a marble basin (French 1989–1990, 61). Another 2nd-century AD house with a marble paved peristyle court that was excavated in another densely populated district of the ancient city, to the south-west of the odeion is of interest because the marble column bases might have carried wooden columns (Malama 1999, 593–597).

One can follow these processes not only in the large urban centres but also in smaller cities like Abdera, where the evidence ranges from houses with continuous habitation (from the late 4th century BC to the late 3rd century AD) to new two-storey houses of the Roman period (Kallintzi 2011, 1109–1112). Characteristic is the large peristyle house (of almost 1000 m²) excavated by D. Lazaridis (1954) in the early 1950s. Rooms were arranged around the three sides of the stone paved central court which had a well in the middle. Evidence also suggests the existence of a second floor. The house belonged to an insula of almost 4000 m² which included three more poorly preserved houses of the Imperial period (based on coin and pottery evidence their lifespan ranges from the late 1st century BC to the end of the 3rd century AD), with their entrances opening to the main cobbled north–south street. The house has produced a number (490) of sherds of Italian and mostly Eastern sigillata, fragments of both plain and decorative relief wares which are currently under publication by M. Papaioannou (2010b). Interesting for their long history and continuous (interrupted by phases or repair and abandonment) habitation is a pair of houses that have been discovered in an insula near the western gate. As in many other cities, next to the new large lavish urban mansions there were many earlier houses which remained in use, remodeled and modernized (Kallintzi 2011, 1109). Their initial construction goes back to the 4th century BC but both houses were reused with some modifications (marble revetments in the walls and addition of mosaics) in the late 2nd–early 3rd century AD, and finally in the 4th century AD. Here as in the rest of the houses of Abdera, the layout consisted of a central paved court with a well, surrounded by rooms built by rough stones occasionally covered by mortar. In another insula which extends east along a north–south road four buildings (labelled A to D and originally thought to be workshops) have been recently reinterpreted as houses (Kallintzi 2011,

1116–1119). Based on pottery finds, they are dated from the Late Classical to the Early Imperial period. The complex included two paved courtyards with gutters, while the walls were built of rough stones occasionally covered with mortar.

A good example of housing in a small town of the Imperial period is the group of houses (labelled III, IV, V) and part of an ancient road that have been discovered clustered together behind the Heroon at Palatiano (Anagnostopoulou-Chatzipolychroni 2004). Their ground plan is not exactly clear, but it seems that in most cases simple stone-built rooms were arranged in a Γ-formation around open spaces with earth floors. The finds (pottery, small metal objects, several loom weights and a few figurine fragments) indicate a date between the 1st century BC and the 3rd century AD. One of the largest was House IV which had five rooms in a Γ-shaped formation. Hearths (1 × 0.80 m) made of clay slabs on a layer of small stones and surrounded by vertical tiles have been found in two of its rooms, the floors of which were paved with stone slabs. More buildings of probable domestic use have been found north of peribolos II of the heroon indicating the dense occupation of the area (Anagnostopoulou-Chatzipolychroni 1996a; 1996b). A relatively large building (1st century BC–3rd century AD) of five rooms and a north–south orientation with a cistern at its south-west corner and a clay basin represents one of the typical domestic residences of the area. The evidence from Palatiano indicates that for a long time building materials, techniques and to some extent architectural details remained those of traditional stock: rough stones, simple mortar and earth-beaten floors.

13.2. Domestic architecture: from the urban mansions of the rich to the modest houses of the non-elites

In summary, it can be said that large peristyle houses with a principal or more reception rooms (the *triclinium*) became typical for elite residences in the many different cities across the province. Some like the house in Amphipolis were free-standing, while others, like the houses in Philippoi or Dion, were part of a residential insula. Some had a tight rectangular perimeter, while others, like the Late Roman houses of Thessaloniki, did not. Many houses continued the simple rectangular plan around a central courtyard but long before the end of the 3rd century AD, one can clearly see the tendency to create large complexes, like the “Villa Dionysos” in Dion.

In most of the cases the domestic architecture seems to have simply exploited existing models. Thus, its most immediately obvious innovation lay not so much on architecture, the application of up-to-date building techniques or layouts as in decoration. Here we can see the emergence of a decorative sophistication and the increasing lavishness and importance of reception halls. This lavishness is perhaps the most consistent characteristic of all this domestic architecture of the Middle Roman period. Lavish architectural ornament with marble pavements, mosaics, sculpture and architectural schemes carried out in marble and painted interior plaster is recorded at different sites, and we can assume that wall paintings in fresco also existed. Red

ochre, extending sometimes to the ceiling was very popular for walls. Another is the presence of water, as manifested in the private baths and the fountains. Although running water reached certain large houses, we can guess that the vast majority of households had to use rainwater from home cisterns or the street fountains.

Few domestic complexes convey such a vivid impression of the elite character of residences of the period as the so-called "Villa Alexandros", a large urban mansion of the 2nd century AD that has been discovered at the site Tsairia (Psara 2000) near Amyntaion and the Lake Vegoritis in North-West Greek Macedonia. The site, sloping gently towards the lake offered enough space for the development of this peri-urban complex that covered over 1.2 acres of land. Although lying today in a totally rural context, the complex seems to have been situated on the outskirts of a town of almost 250 acres that controlled the rich agricultural land near the lake. The villa (under study by P. Chrysostomou, who directed the excavations between 2016–2019) comprised a total of 96 small and large rooms, corridors, baths, stoas and courtyards, making it one of the largest discoveries of its kind in mainland Greece. Walls and floors were meticulously constructed, while the luxurious rooms were paved with white mortar and lined with multicoloured marble or adorned with statues and high-quality mosaic floors (in 11 of the 96 rooms) covering almost a total area of 360 m^2. The polychrome floor mosaics in the so-called "Europa Hall" are the best preserved, depicting a number of mythological scenes including the abduction of Europa, Pan with the nymphs, the abduction of Dione, and Apollo on a Griffin. Among them a well-preserved inscription bears the names of the owners, Alexandros and Memmia, which gave the name of the complex. Another large reception hall labelled "Nereids' Hall" covered more than 90 m^2 and it was the largest and most luxurious space in the compound, decorated with the most elaborate mosaics. The mosaics, arranged in groups around a central water feature, portray sea nymphs riding sea horses, cupids riding dolphins, fishing scenes, fish, birds, and four characters personifying the seasons in the corners of the hall. Marble statues of Hermes, and possibly Athena and Poseidon, copies of Hellenistic and Classical works created from Attic workshops, as well as a marble stele dedicated to the worship of Zeus were also found in this hall, along with a variety of small finds, such as pieces of clay and bronze figurines, bronze plates, bone pins, fragments from glass bottles, pottery and many pieces of silver and bronze jewellery. Finally, another reception hall, the "Beast Warrior Hall" was named after the central mosaic which shows a male figure being attacked by a lion. The abundance of evidence from the "Villa Alexandros" in Amyntaion is very intriguing and the publication of this amazing complex will provide a wealth of information about elite urban residency. Similar large complexes have been found elsewhere in Macedonia. Whether these complexes are villas or peri-urban houses is difficult to dermine. For example, the one in Valandovo (at the site Stakina Cheshma) in North Macedonia where excavations since 1987 have brought to light a large complex of the late 3rd century AD with lavishly decorated rooms (mosaics, opus sectile and opus tessellatum floors).

The urban residences of the rich were of course one aspect of the urban landscape of the period. As for the innumerable smaller residences in everyday use, we know almost nothing. Domestic architecture that lies outside the context of elite residences has attracted little attention. What is clear is that local domestic architecture never saw the introduction of the apartment-type house, the *insula*. Great apartment blocks like those of Ostia or Rome have not been found in Macedonia, since the urban population density that was the main reason for their construction was probably low. Recent research in Thessalian cities such as Demetrias and Metropolis has unearthed small neighbourhoods with remains of houses, shops, baths and, in Metropolis, a small temple, aligned along cobbled roads (Inteziloglou 1985). A complex of the Imperial period found at the harbour of Demetrias (Batziou-Efstathiou 2001–2004, 516–519) is in this sense representative of middle-class housing, a merchant's house whose shop was within the complex sharing the same entrance. The complex, next to the thriving port of the city combined residential units (two spaces adorned with mosaics) with storage spaces (loaded with pottery) and a shop all arranged around a central courtyard. Similar units must have existed in every city across the province although their archaeological identification as domestic units are not always easy, since the focus quite often lies on artisanal activities. For the majority of the simple (non-elite) domestic buildings we can envisage extensive reuse of old material, makeshift practices, even use of wood which was always plenty in the area and probably far more widely used in the everyday architecture than previously thought.

Chapter 14

An architecture of defence: the refortification of the cities

If the house represents the private space where each citizen could showcase his personality and social status then the walls, the outer boundary of the city, reflected from its early stages the identity, power and prestige of the community (Winter 1971; Müth 2019). With the exception of the Greek coastal cities which from very early on were surrounded by solid walls, as was the case with Thasos, Torone or Stageira (Sismanidis 1996), the lack of important fortifications of the Classical period in Macedonia is intriguing. Based on ancient descriptions (Thuc. 1.61.2.) some cities Pydna, Beroia and Europus seem to have been fortified (Stefanidou-Tiveriou 2011a, 447) but it was only in the 4th century BC and after the initiative of King Archelaos (413–399 BC) and later Philip II that massive walls were constructed in all the important centres of the Macedonian kingdom (Hatzopoulos 2011c, 235). Some magnificent examples of this military architecture of the period appearing in Pella (Siganidou 1987) Aigai (Vergina) (Faklaris 1993; 1996) and Dion (Stefanidou-Tiveriou 1998).

The Roman conquest of Macedonia, the constant clashes with the barbaric tribes and the Roman Civil Wars had without a doubt a devastating impact on the fortifications of many large and small towns across the province like the stone-built wall (Adam-Veleni 1996, 12–13) that protected the small city of Petres at Florina. During this period many minor fortifications such as the Hellenistic fort that was discovered in Vrasna (Adam-Veleni 1992, 415–420) seem to have been destroyed or ceased functioning altogether. The fort in Vrasna is a typical example of the many small forts that protected passages and controlled movement in the Antigonid kingdom. Built on top of a hill that controlled the road passing through the straits of Rentina towards the east (near Lake Volvi), it covered an area of approximately 0.4 ha and was fortified by a partially stone-built/dry-brick-built wall equipped with rectangular towers. The fort, which also included artisanal and storage spaces such as an olive oil mill, seems to have been a mixed site of military and agricultural character, as were probably many similar installations across Hellenistic Macedonia.

In practice, after the end of the 1st century BC and the establishment of *pax romana* the fortifications became less significant and in many cases seem to have fallen into ruins, the only exception being large gates such as the “Neapolis Gate” in Philippoi,

which continued to function as an entrance and checkpoint (Stefanidou-Tiveriou 2011, 450). Undeniably, some of the old Classical and Hellenistic circuits and forts along major passages, roads and tracks, like the fort of Kalyva in Nestos (Triantaphyllos 1988), must have been repaired to a functional condition but in general most of the walls and the forts fell into disrepair. One exception is the fortification wall (late 1st AD)[3] made of *opus mixtum* and reinforced by rectangular towers that surrounded (even on the side of the River Crna) the municipium of Stobi (Sanev and Sarẑoski 1981).

Interestingly, this is in contrast with what happened in many cities in the western empire, where the walls even after the establishment of *pax romana* remained one of the most important features of urban landscapes and their repair or rebuilding quite often had an important symbolism as the manifestation of the city's prestige (Thomas 2007, 108–113).

At the beginning of the 3rd century AD and following the death of Alexander Severus, the last of the Severan dynasty, in AD 235 (Cameron 1993, 3), the empire faced a period of external threats, civil strife and economic decline. During this period and until the mid-4th century AD Roman warfare attained gradually a defensive nature which furthered the militarization and fortification of previously unarmed provinces. The military reforms of Emperor Gallienus who turned to more mobile light cavalry units may have been more compatible with the new kind of warfare but left ample ground for bands of warriors to roam the previously unarmed provinces (Alföldi 1967). The first alarm, the raid by the Costobocci, a war party that penetrated deep into Greek soil in the 170s AD during the Marcomannic wars (AD 167–180), was clearly not enough to generate concern for the security of the cities. It was not until the mid-3rd century AD, when first the Goths and other barbaric tribes (there is a debate whether this happened early in AD 253 or later in AD 263) and later the Heruli (on their way back from their naval raid in South Greece) appeared in the area (Alföldi 1939; Kettenhofen 1992) and besieged Thessaloniki, that the need for refortification emerged (organized possibly with imperial initiative see Martín González and Paschidis 2020, 58).

A series of fragments written in classicizing Greek describing the barbarian invasions of the mid-3rd century AD preserved in an 11th–century palimpsest bound into Codex 204, Vindobonensis Hist. gr.73 in Vienna were recently read by Gunther Martin and Jana Grusková (Martin and Grusková 2014) with the aid of digital technology. These fragments describe the siege of Thessaloniki and the role that the walls played in the defence of the city. The events which are also recorded in the Selection of Chronography (*Ecloga Chronographica*) of Georgius Syncellus highlight the role that the newly built walls played in repelling the barbarians who later set their sights on the province of Achaea, where a feverish preparation under the supervision of Marianus, the Roman proconsul and with the help of Philostratus the Athenian philosopher and the Boeotarch Dexippus leading the local militia stopped them at Thermopylae.

[3] http://www.stobi.mk/Templates/Pages/Excavations.aspx?page=183.

What was the real impact of these raids, which judging from their speed seem to have primarily focused on plunder (Brown 2011, 79–96), remains unknown. It is possible that the accounts of the invasions in the literary sources may be exaggerated. Despite the traditional view (Jones 1964, 817–820) of economic and demographic decline (especially in the countryside) the archaeological evidence for the Late Antique countryside shows a vital economy, with new villa sites and prosperous rural agglomerations (Dunn 2004, 565). Indeed, a number of small fortifications (*castra*) were built at commanding positions which could have functioned as refuges in time of crisis but generally most of the population continued to live in largely unfortified settlements in the lowlands (Gregory 1992, 57).

Even though the impact of the barbarians was not so devastating, it undermined the sense of security that was the dominant characteristic of life in all "unarmed provinces". The mid-3rd-century phase of the city walls of Dion represents one of the best studied examples (Stefanidou-Tiveriou 1998) of this feverish rebuilding of fortifications that took place in many Macedonian cities at the period before (or after) the shock of the first Gothic invasions. The Hellenistic city, was already since the time of Cassander, fortified by a rectangular circuit strengthened with rectangular towers that were built every 33 m (Stefanidou-Tiveriou 1998, 248–249). The rectangular shape of the wall (Fig. 33) seems to have been the best defensive choice for a city that was

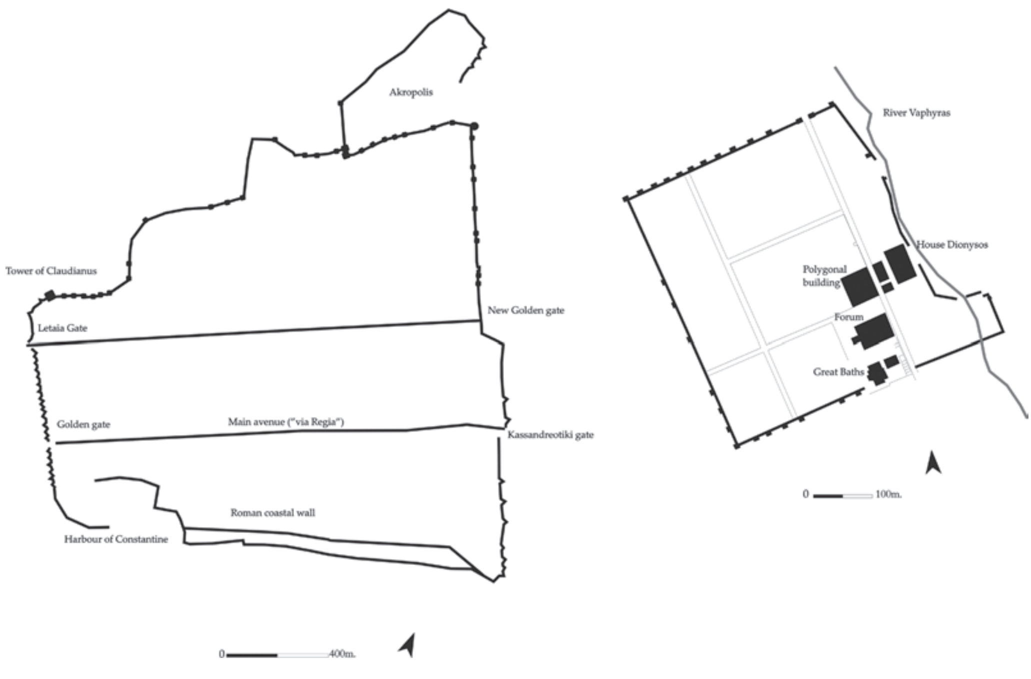

Figure 33. The circuit of Thessaloniki and Dion (digital drawing author). Based on Velenis 1998, 18, fig. 1 and Stefanidou-Tiveriou 1998, fig. A.

developed completely on flat ground and framed on one side by the River Vaphyras (Stefanidou-Tiveriou 1988). This early Hellenistic wall was destroyed and rebuilt at least two times before the Roman conquest, once by an invading force of Aetolians in 219 BC (Polyb. IV 62, 1–2) and then during the Third Macedonian War. As with other city walls in Macedonia during the Imperial period it was left to a slow process of decay and abandonment. The wall seems to have been rebuilt around the mid-3rd century AD (and certainly before AD 270) following generally the same layout as the older Hellenistic wall. The new enceinte was marginally smaller than the previous, covering 37 ha instead of 43 (with a perimeter of 2580 m). The only deviation from the old layout was the east wall which was rebuilt from scratch due to the shifting course of the river. A new addition was a large projection (*provolos*) that was formed at the south-east end of the enceinte in order to protect the river harbour and the docking facilities. Ashlars, spolia, architectural members and funerary monuments, neatly placed so as to present a well-built front indicate that the construction of the wall was not a task done in haste but a carefully executed project. The spolia were set in mortar and arranged in relatively regular courses (Fig. 34), in an obvious attempt to imitate ashlar masonry something which suggests a concern for appearance as well as practical necessity. The masonry of the superstructure is typical of the period: alternating courses of concrete with rubble and brick (although parts were built only by rubble). Many (but not all) of the Hellenistic rectangular towers were rebuilt but in a smaller scale and with a ground floor which fit better for the contemporary strategy of counter attacks. Most of the old Hellenistic gates remained functioning with the addition of an internal defensive court. A new gate with an impressive monumental façade was built at the part of the provolos that led to the harbour. Nevertheless, the life of the wall was short and during the early 4th century AD was left to decay until the Early Christian period when a new, even smaller, enceinte was built.

A similar pattern, especially the extensive use of spolia for the strengthening of the foundations, can be observed in other urban sites across Macedonia like Kassandreia (Sismanidis 1990), Amphipolis (Lazaridis 1977; 1986), Philippoi (Ducoux and Lemerle 1938; Roger 1938) and Beroia (Petkos 1997; Brocas-Deflassieux 1999, 42–43), where funerary monuments and stelae, statue bases and large architectural members were used to rebuild the old Hellenistic walls in the middle of the 3rd century AD. Characteristic are blocks of a large freestanding Hellenistic monument decorated with shields (Markle 1999) that were found embedded in the north and west sides of a large bastion that dominated the north side of the walls of Beroia. These were mostly crudely fit to the walls with the use of rubble and lime as binding material but in cases as the aforementioned bastion or in the north wall where the head of a colossal Medussa (Brocas-Deflassieux 1999,37) statue was inserted carefully in a well-built section we may assume a symbolic, decorative or even apotropaic intention.

In Edessa the largest part of the wall that surrounded the lower city or *Longos* is a construction of the 3rd century AD (Chrysostomou 1987, 167, 169; 1988, 61). As in Dion the Hellenistic walls provided the layout for the circuit but in large sections

Figure 34. Spolia in the walls of Dion and in the diateichisma of Potidaia (photos: author).

these were drastically remodeled or rebuilt leaving no traces of the Hellenistic phase (Chrysostomou 1988, 55, 58). The usual technique of spolia is evident in Edessa with white and red plaster as binding material and many pebbles of various sizes and a considerable proportion of pottery or tiles. All three gates that have been archaeologically investigated show signs of Late Roman intervention, especially the south gate which had the form of a circular courtyard protected by a rectangular tower. This was the start of the colonnaded street that in Early Christian times crossed the city towards the rocky outcrop of the Akropolis (see Chapter 12). Six more rectangular towers, three in the eastern part, one to the south and two to the north, all with signs of Late Roman construction have been archaeologically invesigated.

In Thessaloniki (Fig. 33) successive phases of fortifications during the period between the 4th–6th centuries AD have largely covered traces of earlier walls (Vitti 1996, 119–130; Velenis 1998; Rizos 2011). The Hellenistic fortification, which is known from literary sources, has been found in the northern parts of the city, although the exact extent that these walls covered is a matter of debate. According to one theory the walls built by Cassander enclosed only the semi-mountainous part of Thessaloniki (Velenis 1998, 19–21, 56), occupying an area of *c*. 60 ha north of the modern Agiou Demetriou Street. The akropolis in the north-east sector occupying an area of 3 ha (the place where later the Byzantine Heptapyrgion was developed) had a continuous life from the late Hellenistic period until the Ottoman period. During the mid-1st

century BC and due to the turmoil of the Roman Civil Wars parts of these Hellenistic walls seem to have been replaced with a stone-built wall equipped with rectangular towers of *opus isodomum* masonry. The great change, however, took place in the 3rd century AD under the threat of the Gothic raids when a stone-built wall apparently enclosed the whole of the Roman city, including the location where later the Galerian complex was built (Velenis 1998, 43–88, 170). The relatively thin (1.64 m wide) wall was mainly built of rubble bound with lime mortar, which in the lower sections of the enceinte was reinforced by intermediate zones of ashlars (in the corners and in the base of the towers) and with extensive use of second-hand material, such as altars and architectural members. The top of the wall was crowned by a simple cornice. At intervals of 40 m it was equipped with rectangular towers (average 5.60 × 5.60 m). The size of the towers differed according to the type of the terrain. Smaller (6.55 m) towers were built in the rocky cliffs of the northern part of the enceinte while larger towers (12.30m in width like the domed Claudianus tower in the west wall, see Velenis 1998, 60) were defending the lowlands. This addition was dated by J. Spieser (1974, 507–519) in the years between the first (AD 254) and second siege of Thessaloniki (AD 268) by the Goths but G. Velenis argued that this phase must date later, probably in the reign of Constantine or even Julian (Velenis 1998, 57–58).

Despite its rather weak construction the wall clearly was built as a great circuit, encompassing areas (a total of 260 ha) that were still not inhabited and covering also the seaward front, south of the modern Mitropoleos Street (Tokmakidou *et al.* 2014, 405). It must have also included parts of the old Hellenistic fortifications of the city but as well as other monuments such as the gate arch (Vitti 1996, 170–171) known as the "Golden Gate" at the western wall (see Chapter 12.1 and Fig. 27). Funerary stelae and inscriptions that have been found embedded in towers in the eastern part of the wall (Vitti 1996, 125, n. 250) provide a *terminus post quem* for the completion of the project, namely the years between AD 253 and AD 268.

It is clear that the construction of the walls in Thessaloniki based on the scale of the project should be understood not only as a response to the practical necessity of fortifying the city against the barbarian threat, but also as a project designed to change the urban landscape of this large metropolis (Crow 2001; Provost 2001). The importance of the project in the formation of the urban landscape of the city was such that it is depicted on the pseudo-autonomous coins of the mid-3rd century AD. In one of them, dating to the time of Galienus, Kabeiros, the protector god and tutelary deity of the city holding a hammer in his left hand and a *rhyton* (conical container) in his right hand stands on a heavily fortified gate with two towers (Touratsoglou 1988, 309 and pl. 45). Although the rescue of the city was thought to have been achieved by the divine intervention of Kabeiros (Touratsoglou 1985, 71–83; Vitti 1996, 92), it is clearly the walls that saved the day and secured the safety of the city.

The fortifications of the urban centres probably instigated defensive works in smaller sites, towns and small cities, such as the hastily built rubble wall, 1.40–2.10 m thick, protecting a still unidentified city (Europos?) in Almopia (Chrysostomou 2001b).

On a much larger scale was the great wall (*diateichisma*) that isolated the peninsula of Kassandra from the hinterland (Pazaras 1987). Although the wall in its present state dates mainly to the Justinianic period, recent research has shown that its original phase dates back to the 3rd century AD (Fig. 34).

There is an ongoing debate about how the 3rd-century AD barbarian raids affected the life of urban and rural areas of the province. Though shocking for the stability of the empire, they did not seem to have the dramatic effect that later invasions (6th century AD) had on daily life and social coherence. It is undeniable, however, that over the course of time many cities, such as the city in modern Isar where a Roman *castrum* (rectangular fortress) was built in the 4th century AD (Sokolovska 2011, 18), were reduced to more defensible sizes or abandoned, and many rural settlements and villas were fortified or moved to the highlands. Dozens of small fortified sites of 1 ha or more have been found in naturally defensible positions such as hilltops, mountain passages, or along the main roads, but their exact date cannot be accurately determined. Some of them were probably old Hellenistic forts, reused during the Late Roman period or pastoral enceintes with defensive qualities.

A striking phenomenon of the area of Aegean Thrace is the large number of small forts made by rough stones crowning hill tops (Triantaphylidis 1990; Triantaphyllos 1990). Some are well-preserved but few are closely dated. They were still being used during the Roman period even though their peak seems to have been in the Early Classical period. Forts like the enceintes discovered near the villages Lefkopetra and Filia near modern Xanthi (Triantaphyllos 1973–74, 807) clearly lie outside the normal range of rural settlements, being evidently places of refuge, pastoral activities, defence and cult. The pattern of a mountainous fort, trail and dispersed rural sites at its foot may have had an important role in indigenous spatial organization and it appears in other sites along the foot of Rodope mountains. Historically known transhumance routes, some of which are still recognizable in the landscape, mark the possible routes that were used to reach the settlements in the interior of Rodope (Efstratiou 1999). Most of these routes, which are strongly determined by river valleys and mountain passes, have not yet been systematically mapped, therefore it is not possible to relate the settlement pattern directly to them.

Chapter 15

Deathscapes: urban and rural burial grounds

One of the principal aspects of Macedonian culture that has been illuminated by rich archaeological evidence is burial rites and customs. This is not strange since one of the first type of monuments that have been identified by early archaeological work in the area were burial mounds and cemeteries. During the last 50 years the systematic archaeological investigation (Hatzopoulos 2011d, 41) of several necropoleis of Macedonian cities like that of Aiani in Kozani (Karamitrou-Mentesidi 2011b) and of the monumental "Macedonian" tombs from within and outside the vicinity of the old kingdom have provided us with an abundance of new information about the funerary rites and beliefs in the area (Guimier-Sorbets *et al.* 2006). These seem to have followed well-established mortuary and funerary models of the Greek world. During the Hellenistic period the types of tombs and funerary monuments follow iconographical and decorative motifs that draw their models from the broader Greek world. Attempts to write history from such evidence focused mostly on grave goods (Engels 2010, 82) but also the spectacular Macedonian tombs, a new kind of monumental elite funerary architecture which appeared for the first time in the Greek world around the middle of the 4th century BC to serve the royal house and the elites of Macedonia (Saatsoglou-Paliadeli 2011, 288–290). The custom of burying the members of the upper echelons of Macedonian society in subterranean vaulted burial structures with one or two chambers, marble (or wooden) doorways and a passage (permitting the burial process and subsequent burials and gatherings) leading from ground level to the level of the entrance disappeared at the end of the Hellenistic period along with the elite land-owning class that built and sustained them. Nonetheless, many of the basic mortuary practices, funerary traditions and monuments remained basically the same during the Imperial period. Despite the appearance of new types of tombs like the chamber-vaulted type and monuments such as the funerary altars and sarcophagi (generally, see Koch and Sichtermann 1982), the layout and the typology of graves of the known cemeteries of the Imperial period does not point to radically changing patterns in many aspects of burial practices.

Extensive cemeteries with Roman phases have been identified in every major city of the region, including Thessaloniki, Philippoi, Stobi, Beroia, Edessa, Amphipolis Pella, Dion, Thasos and Demetrias, as well as in smaller cities like Berge (Tasia 1986) in eastern Macedonia, Europos (Savvopoulou and Valla 1992) or Isar/Marvinci in

North Macedonia (Sokolovska 1986). Some of them like the two large cemeteries of Roman Thessaloniki (Makropoulou 2007; Konstantoulas 2010; for the east cemetery, see Trakosopoulou-Salakidou 1999), the east cemetery of Amphipolis (Amoiridou and Malamidou 1998; Malama 2001; Malama and Triantaphyllou 2001), the cemeteries of Edessa (Chrysostomou 2013) and Stobi (Mikulcic 1973; Wesolowsky 1973) or that of the Roman colonies of Pella (Naoum 2017) and Philippoi (the latter with emphasis more on its Early Christian phases, see Pennas 1995) have been extensively studied and provide us with valuable information not only about the great typological variety of graves but also about the organization and layout of these extended peri-urban landscapes. All these sites plus a considerable number of smaller ones in rural contexts have been continuously explored from the early 1960s until today in advance of modern building activity and redevelopment (Fig. 35). Thousands of burials were excavated which consist of a variety of graves: hewn pit graves, cist graves, tile graves of inhumations and cremations but also groups of vaulted chamber graves and sarcophagi.

15.1. Layout and organization

The majority of excavated sites contained both inhumations and cremations, even though the relative percentage varies from site to site; in the east cemetery of

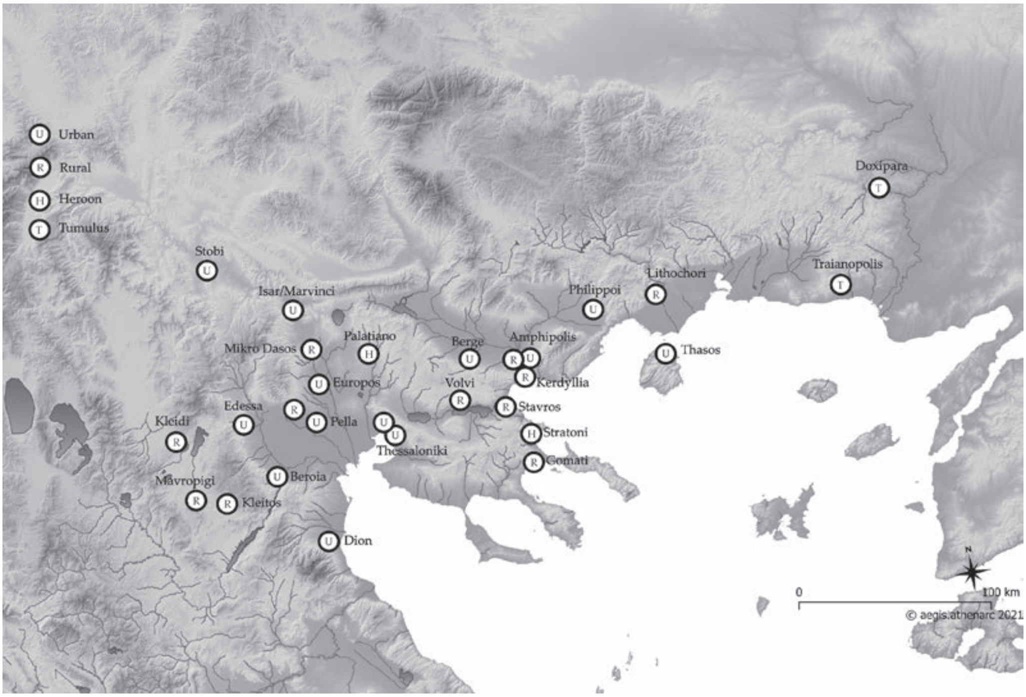

Figure 35. Urban and rural burial grounds mentioned in the text (digital map author).

Thessaloniki, for instance (Tsimbidou-Avloniti 2007a), inhumations prevail but in Pella cremations represent 58% of all burials (Naoum 2017, 523), while at some rural sites like the cemetery in Gomati in Chalkidike, the percentage of creamations reaches 90% (Trakosopoulou-Salakidou 2000). After the 3rd century AD inhumations seem to prevail and to gradually supplant cremations. Only few cemeteries, like the Roman cemetery of Pella, were laid out *ex novo* during the Imperial period suggesting that there was considerable continuity in urban cemeteries. For most of the major urban centres like Amphipolis (Malamidou 2002) their long-existing necropoleis continued to serve the funerary needs of the community (in some cases until the Early Christian period) with new graves being dug amongst the old or with extensions into previously unoccupied land (Koukouli-Chrysanthaki 2011a, 434, n. 224). We have only circumstantial evidence for the decommissioning of old cemeteries by growing cities as may have been the case with Thessaloniki where the expansion of the city towards the south is thought to have destroyed a cemetery near the coast (Tsimbidou-Avlonitou 2007b). Keeping the living away from the dead (physically and spiritually) was a constant feature of Graeco-Roman culture, and thus the act of abandoning an active cemetery would have involved a long ritual of purification. Interestingly, a case of such ritually purified decommissioning of an old tomb has been identified in the centre of the Roman colony of Philippoi, near the site where the forum of the colony was laid out (Koukouli-Chrysanthaki 2011b, 443). The 2nd-century BC chambered tomb along with its superimposed temple-like building (Heroon) above ground seems to have belonged to a child, Euephenes, grandson of Exekestos. The act of purification and the position of the tomb in the centre of the city have been seen as indicators that this was an important landmark of the pre-Roman city, the tomb of an important family in the social hierarchy of Hellenistic Philippoi. Recently, however, the idea has been revised since the area (although *intra muros*) might not have belonged to the real expanse of the Hellenistic city.

As most of the cities had been demarcated by walls since the Hellenistic period, the cemeteries in almost every major city already had a fixed position. Thus, the standardization of the location of the cemeteries seems to be a process linked more to developments that took place in the Hellenistic rather than the Imperial period. The maintenance and continuation of the pre-existing cemeteries was not only dictated by practical reasons and fixed locations but also by the apparent need for continuity and a link to the past. Continued use of pre-existing cemeteries indicates that the particular spaces and their proximity to the gates was of importance to communal consciousness. Wherever this is not evident, as is the case with Pella, this can be seen as a disruption in the continuity of the city itself.

As in previous periods, the cemeteries developed along the edge of settled areas and only few burials like the large tumuli in Thrace stood as isolated monuments (Triantaphyllos and Terzopoulou 1996). Most of the cemeteries lined the major roads leading outside the city gates creating thus extensive mortuary landscapes in the peri-urban area. Absence of spatial data and in many cases the existence of a modern city do not

allow us to define exactly the sizes that these ancient urban cemeteries occupied. Although the gradual extension of these cemeteries further from the cities seems logical, the existing evidence indicates that the areas near the gates instead became denser and denser with many intersecting tombs and the gradual infilling of the given space. The close proximity of many graves and the lack of a specific orientation indicate the lack of available space and the need to use whatever space was available. The absence of any obvious planning has given rise to theories that there was no public control or management over the development and growth of burial grounds. The archaeological evidence from the extensive inhumation cemeteries of Thessaloniki (Marki 2000) seems, nevertheless, to point to the existence of some sort of general management of the space in the form of road construction, accessibility and watering. Therefore, many burial grounds, especially the ones near the gates and along the main roads, seem to have belonged to the cities and thus publicly regulated (Nigdelis 2006, 389).

Inevitably, the lack of available space led gradually from the end of the 1st century AD and increasingly from the 3rd century AD to the development of private grounds funded either by wealthy individuals or professional and religious associations or even ethnic groups, like the Jewish burial ground that might have existed in the east cemetery of Thessaloniki (Nigdelis 2006, 334–342). In Thessaloniki, where private burial grounds are known from epigraphic evidence (Nigdelis 2006), the practice has been archaeologically traced in the expansion of the west cemetery during the 3rd and 4th centuries AD in the form of small concentrations of graves or burial complexes to the northern margins of the area, where land was more available (Konstantoulas 2010, 69). These were built either individually or as burial complexes of two to twelve tombs. Many of these vaulted tombs had their own road leading to the entrance and a small court where common meals or rituals were held.

Most importantly, private cemeteries often carefully landscaped to resemble gardens like the *kepotapheion* of the senator T. Claudius Lycus at Thessaloniki (IG X 2 1, 608), were a means to restrict access to the monuments and burials, privileging certain individuals and families within the greater lineage. For the members of the broader family (and to this we should also include freedmen), mortuary rites and subsequent acts of veneration may have been an opportunity for the family members and their clients to display their solidarity. Yet these events would also have offered an occasion for the kin to gather and renegotiate claims to heritable resources possessed by the lineage (see Nigdelis 2006, 394–395 about the heir of Lycus, a certain Aurelia Matrona who was interred in his sarcophagus).

The overall demarcation (if there was any) of the cemeteries is not always easy to discern and the limits between funerary and non-funerary space were more than often blurred. The evidence from Thessaloniki, Amphipolis (Malamidou 2002), Philippoi and other cemeteries indicates that these were far from "gardens of death"; rather they were busy peri-urban places with features like ceramic kilns, workshops for the supply of pottery, brick, tile and marble, building gathering points, materials to be recycled for the construction of new tombs but also larger architectural features

like houses or baths (for the latter, see Tsimbidou-Avloniti 2007a). Within the sites corridors and roads for visitor traffic between graves and trees have been identified, while sewers, cisterns, wells and fountains met the needs of visitors for water. It is clear that these mortuary spaces were not separated from the physical extension of the city but served different purposes on different occasions.

15.2. Elite prominence

The most important heritable resource for the elites was civic prominence and, as in life, death provided – through public and elaborate funerals of powerful men and women – opportunities for the family to display its status and wealth and legitimize claims to local hierarchy against other elite groups. Massive and elaborate funerary monuments strategically placed in prominent positions near the entrance of the cities were vital to the negotiation of authority throughout the Imperial period. Past scholarship on Roman mortuary practices has emphasized the connotations of power generated by elite funerary monuments (Prowse 2014). Throughout the Roman world funerary shrines operate not only to commemorate the dead but also as stages for the social and political performances of their successors and later generations. This was a phenomenon clearly not restricted only to the large urban centres. It can also be observed in smaller towns, where competition for local power between the elite families was constant.

Illustrative in this regard are two funerary shrines and tombs that have been discovered in Palatiano (near modern Kilkis) and in Stratoni (in eastern Chalkidike), respectively. In both sites we have the exceptional cases of intramural burials where the shrines are regarded as public monuments in their own rights. The chambered family shrine and tomb that was excavated in 1960 at Palatiano (the site of ancient Ioron), near modern Kilkis, contained a large inscribed podium which held the statues of the family members of the local man of power Patraos Zoilou and his wife Ammia Menandrou (Stefanidou-Tiveriou 2009c). The four statues (together with a fifth that has not survived), which are dated to the early 2nd century AD (probably Trajanic), present the family members (two himation-wearing men and a female figure in the type of the Small Herculaneum Woman), while one of them, larger in size and in heroic nudity, may depict the patron or his elder son. A similar family shrine and tomb (Themelis 1964) with two chambers was excavated in the early 60s in Stratoni in eastern Chalkidike, probably the site of ancient Stratonikeia. Three statues, one of them female and possibly the owner of the tomb, have been found *in situ* along with the remains of a stone built grave and a pedestal.

15.3. Burial types and monuments

The usual burial practice over the period continued to be inhumation, in a variety of grave types from simple pit graves covered by tiles or slabs, to vaulted tombs,

elaborate sarcophagi and, occasionally, buildings, such as *cubicula* or *mausolea* in Thessaloniki, and heroa as the ones we saw at Palatiano and Stratoni. Research has until now focused mostly on the larger and more elaborate tomb types and funerary monuments, with emphasis on the architecture, inscriptions or visual elements, and less to the thousands of simple shaft graves which have been traditionally regarded as belonging to the less wealthy citizens. Nevertheless, the rich grave finds that have been discovered in many tile or shaft graves indicate (Makropoulou 2007, 437) that this view is not always true: haste, in case of sudden death, and not necessarily cost may have dictated the type of the grave used. As in the previous period, inhumation burial involved the use of a grave where the body was laid out at full length on its back and a funerary monument marking the position above it. This may vary from a simple slab with the name of the deceased inscribed in its front to more elaborate monuments like relief *stelae* (Rizakis and Touratsoglou 2000; 252–257; Rizakis and Touratsoglou 2016, 122) or funerary altars supplied with a pipe allowing libations being poured directly into the grave (libation pipes without altar have been found in Edessa and Stobi). The latter date from the second half of the 1st century AD to the end of the 2nd century AD and had the form of a rectangular or cubical plinth, often with one or two steps at their base. They were usually constructed by rough stones and coarse mortar as a binder and more rarely by well-squared stones or marble. Their exterior surfaces were smoothed with a thin layer of mortar bearing a white or yellowish coating and color.

Over the Imperial period new types of monuments such as the funerary altars and sarcophagi (Fig. 36) appear in the mortuary landscapes of the province. Both types arose as popular funerary monuments after the end of the 1st century AD, but their use accelerated after the 2nd century AD. The funerary altar which normally stood atop simple pit graves (Adam-Veleni 2002), with its bulky monolithic vertical rectangular shape, and the frequent use of busts in relief and inscriptions in its front, met with wide distribution in Macedonia and the rest of the Balkan provinces during the Middle Roman period. Inscriptions on the front of the monuments often mention the date of dedication, so we know that the altars of Thessaloniki, for instance, were constructed between *c.* AD 130–240. Rizakis and Touratsoglou (2016, 124) have proposed that the monuments may be of north Italian origin which could explain their wide distribution in cities with Roman citizens, but T. Stefanidou-Tiveriou highlighted their typological and iconographical resemblance with similar monuments of the Greek East (Stefanidou-Tiveriou 2011b, 576). Although they appear quite frequently in large cities (Heraclea Lyncestis, Thessaloniki, Beroia, Philippoi and Dion), they are rarer in rural contexts, especially in Upper Macedonia (Rizakis and Touratsoglou 2016, 124). These funerary altars (Fig. 36) have been seen as the reflection of a vibrant middle class with money to spend on funerary architecture and the promotion of the family name.

The large marble sarcophagi (Stefanidou-Tiveriou 2014) that have stood as individual monuments or in groups forming a *triclinium* shape comprise the other most common form of elite burial (Fig. 36). If compared to the funerary altars, they clearly

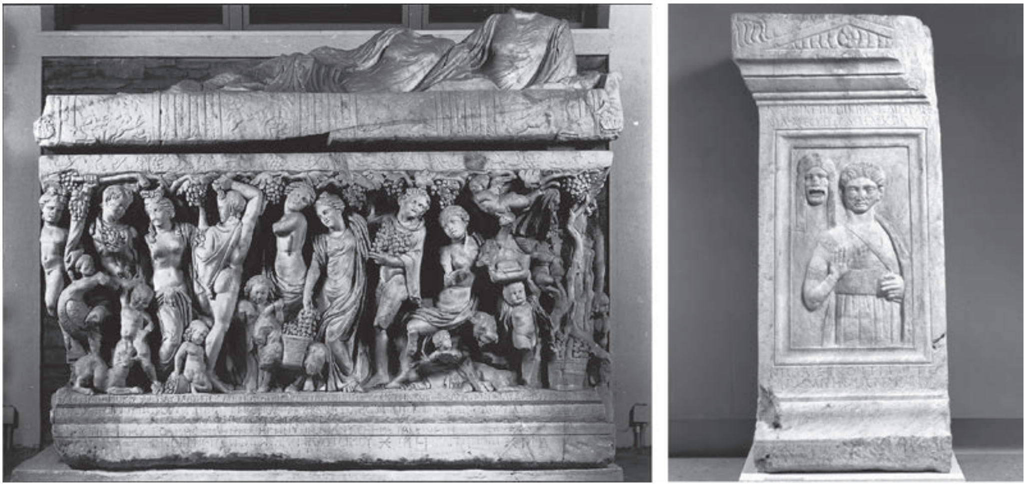

Figure 36. Imported sarcophagus from Attica and the funerary altar of the actor Areskon (source: AGME archive Cast Museum Aristotle University of Thessaloniki). Archaeological Museum of Thessaloniki no. 1247 (photo: von Eickstedt). Archaeological museum of Thessaloniki no.1524 (photo: M. Skiadaresis).

belong to a different level of monument building with regard to cost, elaboration and ownership. Their high cost in combination with their portability and the fact that they were easy to be reused explains the inscriptions found on a great number of them, imposing fines in case of disturbance, reallocation or reuse. These were clearly lavish and expensive family tombs that were usually set up outdoors in public or private cemeteries on simple stone bases or covered possibly by a light construction. Two groups of these monuments have been recognized: an imported one from Athens, lavishly decorated with mythological scenes, and a local type in Thasian marble (heavily influenced by Asia Minor, see Stefanidou-Tiveriou 2001b) best represented by group of Middle Roman monuments from Thessaloniki (dated – based on epigraphical evidence – between AD 130–270) with a pedimental cover and large inscription on their front decorated with garlands, animal heads and floral motifs.

When the discussion comes to tomb types, the vaulted chambered tombs stand out among the many excavated pit and tile graves as a novelty of the period. The type appeared in the middle of the 3rd century AD and continued well into the Early Christian period (Philippoi and Thessaloniki) as a form of a communal tomb which could accommodate multiple burials (Makropoulou 2007, 414–423). The basic type consisted of a corridor entrance leading to an underground chamber (often with a vestibule) covered by a vaulted roof. In most of these tombs the vaulted roof, made by stones and bricks (but never exclusively by brick or caementicium), was boxed in a cube-shaped stone structure, which was formed flat at the top and only in a few cases such as Europos (see Savvopoulou and Valla 1992, 435–438) the vault was

visible to the exterior. Burial took place in niches opened in the walls or on the floor or in wooden coffins that have not survived (for remnants of coffins in Stavros, see Sismanidis and Violatzis 2007, 306, and in Gomati, see Trakosopoulou-Salakidou 2000). The vaulted tombs offered a different ordering of space than the usual inhumation burial of the period. On average, more than two places were available for burials but this number varied considerably. Hundreds of these tombs have been found, individually and in complexes of two, three, six and nine tombs as well as some complexes of dozens of arched tombs in a row with a common partition. The appearance of the type in the 3rd century AD has been seen as the resurgence of the idea of the vaulted Macedonian tomb (Konstantoulas 2010, 73). The mimicking of past funerary architecture might make sense in a period when there was a general revival of the glorious Macedonian past.

15.4. Rural burial grounds

Away from the large urban centres, different burial grounds have been excavated in rural areas across the province. Their size ranges from a handful of graves to dozens or in some cases hundreds of burials, such as the large cemetery (1st–4th centuries AD) that was discovered at the site Strobolos in Nea Kerdyllia which contained more than 246 pit graves (Malama and Darakis 2008), or the large Late Roman cemetery that was discovered at the site Dasos Mavropigi in Kozani (Ziota *et al.* 2104) which contained 376 graves richly furnished with clay and glass vessels, bronze and iron jewellery, weapons and bronze coins.

Burial grounds like Nea Kerdyllia are normally attributed to neighbouring towns or communities which are not always easily archaeologically identified. The task of interpreting and relating these sites to specific settlements, as is the case with the Roman period cemetery in Stavros (very close to the cemetery of Kerdyllia), is not without problems, since usually uncertainty rests not only over the identification of individual rural sites but also about the distinction between single or nucleated rural sites or small towns. For instance, based on general observations such as the small size of the burial grounds and the proximity to a villa, it has been suggested that rural cemeteries, such as the one in Giannitsa in Central Macedonia (Chrysostomou and Zaragiannis 2007), may have been a family cemetery. A direct connection between the location of the cemeteries and the location of their parent settlements may have applied to some sites, although it is not necessary to conclude that all small burial grounds were private, family cemeteries.

Undeniably, since there is not always a strong link between rural cemeteries and settlements or roads (although it must be noted that the identification of rural roads is generally difficut), we are left with assumptions that may not always reflect reality. For instance, there is always the chance that large rural cemeteries – as is the case with Kerdyllia – may have served a wider catchment area than a single settlement. The small cemeteries of the 2nd–4th centuries AD that have been discovered at sites

such Kryoneri (2.5 km north of Amphipolis) with 31 tombs, Stavros in eastern Chalkidike with 65 graves (covering a surface of 300 m², see Sismanidis and Violatzis 2007), Gomati in Chalkidike with 42 graves (Trakosopoulou-Salakidou 2000), Megali Volvi (Lioutas and Georgiadis 2005), Kleidi in Florina (Strati and Sinakos 2006) and Kleitos in Kozani (Vrachionidou 2017), provide a very illustrative picture of such relatively small burial grounds. The funerary assemblage consists mostly of tile-covered graves but there are also more laborious constructions such as stone-built cist graves with marble or slate coverings and, in the case of Gomati, funerary stone enclosures surrounding pit graves containing cremations. In all cases the grave goods (pottery, glass vases, but also jewellery) indicate societies with a relatively high standard of living.

Against this general background, an exception is represented by some burial sites where the native tradition of cremation cemeteries survived together with stone enclosures as the dominant burial practice. A rare view into the cemetery of a still unidentified settlement of the hinterland is provided by the extensive burial ground that has been spotted by hunters at the site Mikro Dasos near the border between Greece and North Macedonia (Valla *et al.* 2008). The tombs dating from the 2nd century BC to the 2nd century AD contained exclusively cremations in shallow rectangular or irregularly shaped pits which often were surrounded by low stone-built walls. The tombs were clustered together in groups and were surrounded by circular or rectangular enclosures. In the 3rd century AD, cremations were replaced by the more typical for the period inhumations in pit tombs or covered with tiles. The peculiarities in the typology, the layout of the cemetery and in the finds (clay vases and figurines, coins, jewellery, weapons and tools, but also handmade vessels) suggest a rural community little touched by external influences. The site at Mikro Dasos may have been sustained by an agrarian local community of native stock but nonetheless it displays the population density (estimated just below 2000 individuals) and social organization of a small town with indications of a well-organized local economy.

A tendency towards conservatism in the observance of some burial customs may have characterized other rural areas where the influence exerted by the Romanized towns was weaker. This continuity is recognizable in other features of the rural landscape, the large individual tumuli (in order to separate them from tumuli in the organized cemeteries) that dotted the landscape in Aegean Thrace: 53 have been discovered in the area of Xanthi, 48 in Rodope and 145 in Evros, most of them dated to the Imperial period (Triantaphyllos and Terzopoulou 1996). The term is applied to large earth mounds that covered cremation burials which were often accompanied by animal remains and elaborate weapons or furniture. The tumuli burial custom which continued to be practiced in the area during the Imperial period is in its context and form entirely analogous to that employed for centuries in the hinterland. Its popularity and nature do not allow a satisfactory explanation without invoking issues of identity which is based upon a close connection with tradition (Evangelidis 2020b, 53–54). This was bolstered by the discovery of particular finds like horse burials, wagons or swords which were viewed as features that drew a clear distinctive line

between ‘Thracian’ and ‘Greek’ practices. Full sets of weapons have quite often been buried with adult males, even though single weapons or horses were deposited with young – mostly male – children. In the great tumulus of Doxipara in North Evros no less than 15 young horses (Triantaphyllos and Terzopoulou 2003; Trantalidou 2010) have been interred in the burial grounds, while of the ten large Imperial period tumuli that have been discovered in the area of North Evros, three contain the remains of horses with gear. The burial of Tumulus B in Lade, an adult horse with its gear (something that would have been expected in a male burial) next to the grave of a small child (3–4 years old), indicates the key roles that these animals played in myth, cosmology and social organization. The same can be said for other grave goods like weapons which have been found in many male burials, followed by ceramics, glass vessels and adornments. However, it is likely that all these grave goods had many more connotations besides religion or tradition. It can be argued that they performed a specific communicative function (during the pre-burial rites) which served to create and strengthen allegiances with gender and social rank. These goods might have proclaimed particular identities, associations within Imperial period Thrace linked with martial virtues, which were appreciated in the context of the Roman army. It may also be argued that what the laborious construction of these large earth mounds (which entailed manpower and special skills) reflected is nothing more than the representation of the identity of the most prosperous within local groups. These individuals (or their kins) made explicit use of symbolism underscoring mainly their position in the new order rather than ethnicity.

Many aspects of the function of these large monuments within the landscape remain largely undetermined. One of them for instance is their relationship with the neighbouring settlements or with roads. For the latter, illustrative are the Imperial period burial tumuli that were discovered very close to the stretch of Via Egnatia passing near Traianopolis (Triantaphyllos 1991). Their prominent position indicates how the very act of moving would have emphasized their importance in the shaping and the perception of the landscape.

The burial grounds at Lithochori, a site very close to the new Roman city of Ulpia Topeiros is a case in point (Poulios and Mengidis 2006; 2007). The small settlement that was discovered during the construction of the modern Egnatia motorway consisted of the remains of what seems to be a peristyle building and an extensive burial ground with a lifespan (interrupted in the Late Hellenistic period) from the 5th century BC to the 3rd century AD. There during the 2nd century AD, a Romanized Thracian of the local tribe of Sapaians, received the rite of a wealthy burial whose grave goods amongst others included, a two-wheeled wagon (along with its horses), which was elaborately decorated with a metal frieze bearing archaicizing mythological scenes. A second, partially preserved wagon and two separate horse burials that have been discovered in proximity might have belonged to the same burial context. The deceased was a certain T. Gaius Sitas, the name of whom was found engraved on the boss of a Roman-style shield that was found interred with one of the horses. The burial has

been interpreted – on a totally speculative basis – as that of a high-ranking official (possibly a *strategos* according to the excavators) of the *strategia Sapaiake* (one of the Aegean districts/ tribal units of Roman Thrace).

15.5. Cross-provincial trends in the formation of deathscapes

The period between the late 1st and the 4th centuries AD marked a boom in the construction of elaborate funerary monuments and more people than in the previous periods were probably involved in this conspicuous display of funerary architecture. Despite the strong influence that local models might have exercised, the vaulted tombs, the funerary altars and to a certain degree the sarcophagi had no real predecessors before the Roman period. The urban cemeteries in particular display a greater variety of tombs and funerary monuments than the preceding periods. Imports such as the Attic sarcophagi and the production of local imitations show a clear trend towards embellishment of the external features of what can be called display tombs (Stefanidou-Tiveriou 2010). It could be argued that it is exactly this conspicuous burial architecture which becomes the ground for the expression of status with a reversal of the earlier pattern where status found expression in monuments like the Macedonian tombs or the chamber tombs which had a more introverted character.

This picture is quite often read as indicating a highly ranked society but at the same time it may reveal a society where competition for local power was always constant. Visibility and elaboration may say a lot about the particular members of society that produced them, but it is clear that the people who undertook construction of such monuments represent only a small fraction of the population of the province. Although archaeologically interesting, these elaborate monuments represent the exception and not the norm.

Therefore, if we want to detect some cross-provincial traits, then the persistence of old burial customs and tomb types in many small cities, towns and rural settlements is probably the most important one. This is a fact which is quite often overlooked by the emphasis on the diversity of burials, the elaboration of funerary monuments and the size of large cemeteries in the large urban centres. Although the character of rural cemeteries appears to conform to the evidence from the burial grounds in urban locations, the lack of elaborate burial monuments is striking. Nonetheless, the evidence for these urban and rural cemeteries is significant in its own right and raises two main points. The first is the conservatism that many local communities exhibited in the specific rites and practices pertaining to the dead. The second is how the building of mortuary landscapes can in some cases, such as the tumuli and the stone enclosures, be regarded as an expression of a regional identity.

Chapter 16

Outside the cities: villas, farms and other types of rural sites

As we have seen in the Chapter 2.2 villas and farmsteads are regarded as the most obvious signs of the impact of Rome in the rural landscape (Dyson 2003; Rizakis 2013; Papaioannou 2018). Over the last 20 years a great many of these rural sites (villas, farmsteads and other rural agglomerations) have been excavated during the course of the great public road works that were carried out across North Greece. Despite the intensive archaeological work across the region, the evidence from the excavated rural sites is surprisingly limited with the quality of data being highly heterogeneous. This, as noted by D. Grigoropoulos (2013) for similar contexts in Achaea, can largely be explained by the nature of the excavations themselves (mostly development-driven rescue excavations) but also due to the fact that the archaeological investigation and detailed study of rural sites in contrast to urban monuments never attracted (with some notable exceptions) much scholarly interest in Greek academia. For certain regions where major public road construction has taken place, such as the outskirts of Thessaloniki, or the region of western Greek Macedonia, where the public works funded by the Public Electricity Company over the last 10 years have enriched our knowledge of the archaeology of this remote area, there is much evidence for rural sites. References to particular architectural features, typology and material evidence for production or agriculture are often found in excavation reports but the amount and detail of information varies significantly. A concise classification of the different site types (farms, villages, hamlets and roadside settlements) that comprised the rural landscape is lacking and the archaeological discussion focuses on only two types of sites: villas and farmsteads. Even so, it is quite often difficult to draw a clear dividing line between the two categories (Rothaus 1994) and the classification is most usually based on the absence or presence of specific indicators like for instance size, architectural sophistication in the form of mosaics, wall paintings, hypocaust floors, baths or elaborate sculpture (Witcher 2012). Another problem relates to the relationship between villa-type rural sites and larger assemblages like *komai* or *vici*. Little work has been done on the subject and quite often what originally seemed to be a single rural site, proved to belong to a larger assemblage of buildings (Ketanis 2015–2016, 41, n. 110).

Figure 37. Rural and villa type sites mentioned in the text (digital map author).

Although the term *villa* is quite often broadly defined and used, here it is used to denote sites which, regardless of their distance from an urban centre, clearly functioned as a working estate and not simply as a leisure house. Nevertheless, and despite the above-mentioned constraints and the gaps in the material record, the emerging picture is one of great variety (Fig. 37) with the excavated remains ranging from the luxurious to the purely agricultural. These can be found in different agricultural areas of the province and in varying densities and distances from urban centres or large rural settlements. A great many of these sites have been found and excavated in the outskirts of Thessaloniki or in the broader vicinity of Philippoi (Ketanis 2015–2016). There are other areas of the rural heart of Macedonia, for instance, the area north of the Roman colony of Archontiko in Pella (Georgiadou and Lagoudi 2009) and that around the Lake Vegoritis, which show an immensely complex mosaic of small and medium-sized farms. Much of Pallene (modern day Kassandra), the first peninsula of Chalkidike presents a similar picture with large numbers of stone-built farmsteads (Tsigarida *et al.* 2009, 380) of the Roman and Late Roman period, and the same can be said for more remote areas, like Pelagonia. More puzzling is the picture derived from investigation into the rural sites of the areas east to Nestos where very few villa-type sites seem to have been built before the Later Roman period, despite the emergence of new urban centres like Topeiros or Traianopolis. A case has been put forward that

much of this land was marginal in terms of agricultural exploitation, something that would have stifled the development of large private estates (Tsiafakis and Evangelidis 2021). The settlements that have been found at the foot of the Rodope range from farmsteads to what might be classed as small agglomerations of houses and seem to belong to a very basic agropastoral economy. Enclosed enceintes which crown many of the hill tops of the area reflect an emphasis on raising stock, especially local mountain short-horned cattle known as cattle and sheep.

Over most of the province, large wealthy country houses, the centre of working estates seem to have developed in areas of agricultural potential and natural beauty mainly after the mid-2nd century AD. Excavations have revealed establishments of several hundred square meters with residential and farm buildings, burial grounds, and agricultural installations (Adam-Veleni *et al.* 2003). We can assume that a great number of them followed on from pre-existing farms, but this has been archaeologically confirmed in few cases only. One of these cases is the villa site that was discovered at the village of Kato Kleines in the vicinity of Florina. There, rescue excavations during the early 1980s brought to light the mosaic floor of a reception hall that has been dated to the 2nd century AD (Akamatis 2004). This proved to be the latest addition to a rather simple country house which developed around a central court with wooden columns (Fig. 38). The pottery collected during the excavation indicates that the life of the building spanned the Late Hellenistic period to the late 2nd century AD, when the site was finally abandoned.

The remains of a large rural site with signs of architectural elaboration in the valley of the Angitis River in the *chora* of the Roman colony of Philippoi and very close to Via Egnatia is a typical example of a villa-type site in the area (Ketanis 2015–2016, 34–35). The grand villa which covered at least 1100 m^2 was most probably laid out in the early 2nd century AD but in its present condition dates probably from the late 3rd or early 4th century AD. The walls built of local stone in the *opus mixtum* technique are mostly preserved at foundation level, since the structure was heavily quarried in Byzantine times (Dadaki 1995, 679–81). The excavations (Dadaki 1995; 1999) brought to light a large central square structure (50 × 22 m) consisting of two wings with spacious and elegant rooms around a colonnaded courtyard (12.30 × 12.40 m) and at least six different secondary spaces for production and storage, each with its own entrance. As in many other residences, a large apsed hall/*triclinium* (10.70 × 14.50 m) with a large octagonal marble paved cistern (περιρραντήριο) in the middle of the room functioned as the main reception hall of the complex. Five more rooms decorated with polychrome mosaics bearing geometric and floral motifs, were probably used for accommodation and leisure. A large drain that run through the central court has been linked with a bath that might have functioned in the east wing while an octagonal tower (probably an addition of the last phase of the complex) occupied the south-west corner.

The same lavishness is apparent in other sites like the large villa (the remains covering more than 800 m^2) of the 4th–5th centuries AD that has been discovered at

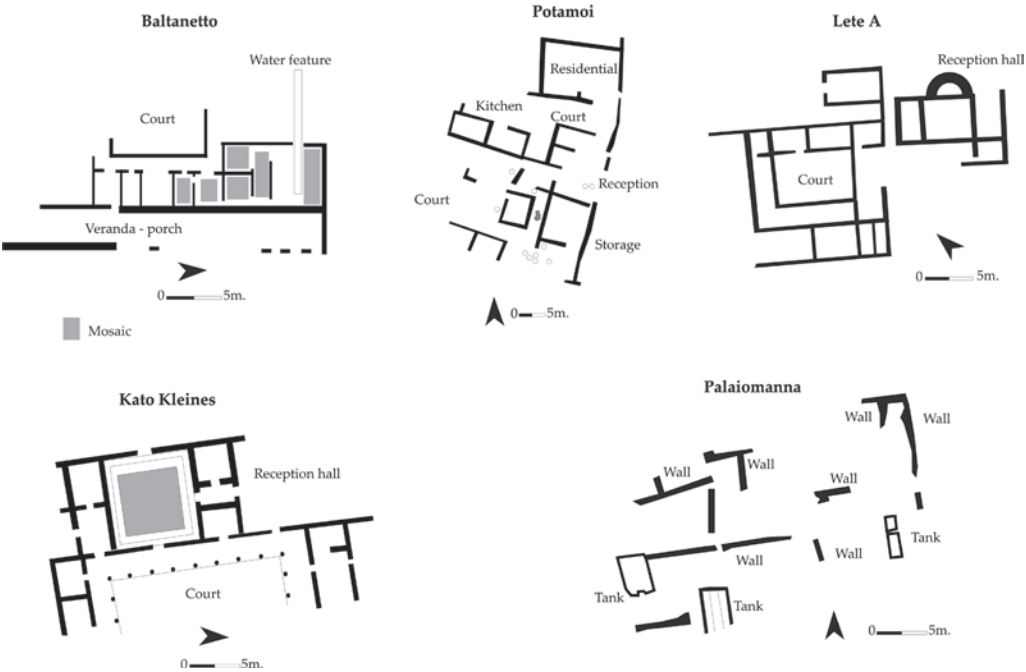

Figure 38. Architectural remains of villas and farms in Baltanetto, Potamoi, Lete, Kato Kleines and Palaiomanna (digital drawing author). Baltanetto based on Petsas 1965, 36–8, fig. 1. Potamoi: Malama and Darakis 2005, 35, fig. 2. Lete A: Tzanavari and Filis 2000, 159, fig. 5. Kato Kleines: Akamatis 2004, 655, fig. 5. Palaiomanna, Koukouvou 1999b).

the village of Velvento (in the vicinity of Kozani in Western Macedonia). There 16 rooms of different functions (among them receptions halls, storage areas and a large bath decorated with mosaics) were grouped around a central colonnaded courtyard (Tsiapali 2009). A large marble threshold led from the west stoa to a central reception hall with internal dimensions 8.30 × 10.50 m and a polychrome mosaic of excellent quality. Although the construction of the villa is placed in the 4th century AD the building seems to have been founded on the ruins of an older building, a pre-existing Imperial period mansion, part of which was utilized in the new complex (Tsiapali 2010). Similarly in Megali Kipsa in the Kassandra peninsula in Chalkidike (ancient Pallene), in an ideal position overlooking the coast and with wide access to the fertile fields to the east of the site, rescue excavations during the early 1970s, which remain unpublished, brought to light the remains of a relatively large complex of seven buildings, including a house with an *atrium* and *triclinium*, a bath, warehouses (for storing wine, oil and grains), workshops (for pottery and metal processing) and other quarters (Papangelos 1981, 320). The complex seems to date to the 3rd century AD, and it was replaced in the 6th century AD by an Early Christian basilica which seems to have followed the same basic layout. Other Early Christian religious sites

that have been found across the province seem to occupy the sites of villas of the Imperial period. Examples include the episcopal palace of the bishopric of Pydna, (*c.* AD 479) at Louloudies in Kitros Pieria (a four-towered enclosure measuring 80 × 90 m including workshops and related structures, see Marki 2013) which was built over the remains of a *villa rustica* of the Tetrarchic period with fine mosaic floors (geometric patterns), and a baptistery/basilica at the site Ambelia Voskochori (in Emathia) which was built over a rural site/villa equipped with a large bath with clay water pipes that carried water from springs from the east slopes of Mt. Bermion and others higher up (Paisidou 2004). The succession of villa sites by ecclesiastical buildings is an extremely interesting phenomenon which might have to do either with the role of the villa as the focus of a small rural settlement or the function of the villa as a site for worship, since many of these large houses could have functioned as *tituli* churches (churches in private buildings) outside the cities.

The basic layout of a working estate of the Angista villa is repeated at other villa sites, although not always with the same clear excavation results. That in Stephanina (2 km north of the Roman–Early Christian city of Arethousa) lies in fertile soil overlooking Lake Volvi. Brief archaeological research has brought to light the remains of an important 2nd–3rd-century AD building complex: marble architectural fragments, a large marble perirrhanterion, marble columns, bases and pillars that have been found during the excavation belonged to this elaborate villa (Adam-Veleni 2001–2004; Adam-Veleni and Zografou 2003). Similarly elaborate architectural remains that were found during the 60s in the vicinity of the village Nesi in Emathia (in the rural core of the old kingdom) indicate the existence of a large villa site (see Fig. 24) which included a Roman bath of the 3rd–4th century AD and large buildings made of ashlar and floors with terracotta tiles and hydraulic mortar. Architectural members, mosaic floors with geometric patterns, funerary altars, a milestone and landscape features like tumuli that have been found in a 2 km radius from the baths indicate the importance of the site (Andreiomenou 1968a; Poulakakis 2012, 585). In Palaiomanna near Beroia, a large building of the 2nd century AD (35 × 25 m) which has been interpreted as a villa (Koukouvou 1999a; 1999b) with a long period of use (from the Late Hellenistic to the 4th century AD) is of special interest not so much for its residential units but for its facilities for fish farming (Fig. 38). Three cisterns hewn into the bedrock belong to the building. The first (2.70 × 4.15 m) had a stone bench on the north and a pithos on the east side. The second (3.42 × 4.10 m) was plastered with hydraulic mortar and had pipes for water. Six clay vessels were incorporated in two walls serving the fish-farming needs for which the cistern was supposedly used. The third cistern was separated by a wall into two spaces. The discovery of a storage room with pithoi, storage pits, hearths and ovens and abundant pottery finds including cooking, storage and terra sigilata vessels, clay lamps, figurines, bronze jewels, loom weights, slags and lead pieces, numerous nails and bronze coins indicate that this was a working estate of substance.

Like Nesi or Palaiomanna, other large villa sites that combined architectural elaboration with the costly facilities of a working estate seem to have developed in the

agricultural zone running from Beroia to Edessa to the north-east, where the agricultural core of the old kingdom lay. That at the site Baltaneto (Petsas 1963), very close to the ancient city of Mieza (Fig. 38), was laid out in the late 1st or early 2nd century AD with spacious and elegant rooms around a court and with a large colonnaded façade (veranda type which had its roots in Macedonia) to its south exterior (Petsas 1965, 36–38). The excavations brought to light only the east part of the complex, a series of six rooms decorated with magnificent mosaics and, in one of them (the so-called room A), an indoor pool or reservoir. This was decorated with a mosaic and its walls were covered with hydraulic mortar and marble veneer. The tank was supplied with water from the west, while at the eastern end it bore a discharge spout. A large corridor linked the main room A with smaller rooms to the south, all decorated with mosaics with intricate geometric patterns in black and white quartered squares. Similar Italian-inspired mosaics have been discovered in another grand villa which lay at the site Tsifliki near Mieza (Parcharidou-Anagnostou 2011, 702). Of extreme interest for its uniqueness and its Italian/western style is the mosaic in black and white depicting a sea creature among dolphins.

It would be fascinating to know more of the architecture of large villa sites and the pattern of land ownership. Inscriptions like the dedication of a certain Zosimos to his master Ailios Nikopolianos, a high esteemed member of the Koinon of Macedonians, from the area of Langadas in Mygdonia hint at the existence of large (slave-run?) estates managed by overseers (*pragmateutes*) such as Zosimos himself, but quite often the evidence on the ground does not permit any real light to be shed on the relationship between textual information and architectural remains (Nigdelis and Lioutas 2009).

But even outside the central core of the province, there are hints of sites of high status. A very illustrative example is the complex of three buildings of the 4th–6th centuries AD, occupying a total built area of 563 m^2 which was discovered in Molos on the coast of Abdera (Kallintzi and Chrysafi 2007). These seem to belong to a Late Roman coastal villa which, besides the usual architectural elaboration (such as the existence of a small bath in the north-east corner of the so-called building A), shows evidence for the use of ornate windows, since a large number of glass fragments from window panels have been found in the *triclinia* of Buildings A and C. Another building, the so-called Building B, has been interpreted as a stable or a storage area. Although, as many of the previous sites we have examined, this was a Late Roman construction there is no reason not to assume that similar features were not introduced much earlier. Evidence for glass windows or glass panels have been found in domestic contexts of the 1st–2nd century AD in Patras (Papaioannou 2002, 220) and Corinth (Papaioannou 2002, 141–142).

Although rural sites like the one in Angista or Palaiomanna may hint at a rural environment dotted by lavish country residences/working estates, archaeology suggests a more complex picture. Most excavated remains were comparatively modest structures which show a marked tendency for a rectilinear plan and simple

architecture (building techniques) with walls made out of rough stones and a wooden roof. By far the most informative case for the region is the group of four farmsteads found clustered together at Lete, very close to Thessaloniki and next to the Via Egnatia. Of the group of four that have been found together farmstead A (Tzanavari and Filis 2000) is by far the largest building covering a surface of 850 m² (Fig. 38). Its walls were built of rubble and mortar and its roof was covered by Laconian roof tiles. The rooms were arranged around a central court with the residential areas in the north side and the production and storage areas to the south. A long corridor ended at a staircase which most probably led to a second floor. A vat for wine production and a large room for storage pithoi in the south side indicate at least one of the specialized productions that took place in the farm. Farmstead B was discovered only 350 m to the west and comprised two buildings. The larger one covers 460 m² and had a central court defined in the east and west by two long rooms, the westernmost of which bears architectural elaboration in the form of plaster decoration. The second building is smaller, covering only 68 m², and its use is uncertain, although in the vicinity a large quantity of loom weights led the excavators to argue that it served textile production. Based on the pottery collected, the lifespan of the building was relatively short, from the mid-1st century BC to the end of the 1st century AD. The same basic layout is repeated in farmstead C, a relatively large building of 690 m² with a central court entered through a gate and surrounded by five rooms. As in farmstead B, a staircase might have led to a second floor, while a number of pithoi in the south indicate a large storage area. Finally, the excavations of the so-called farmstead D have revealed two buildings, a relatively large *triclinium* (of 207 m²) and a long bibartite room which has been interpreted as a stable. Burial of horses in and outside the building have strengthened the identification and the zooarchaeological study of the remains has identified two draught stallions and a war horse. The farms at Lete provide a remarkable instance of what could be regarded as a typical medium-sized villa site and perhaps one of several in the broader region.

Another good example of such medium-sized rural units is illustrated by the site excavated in Aphytis (Missailidou-Despotidou 2007, 318–321) on the Kassandra peninsula (the ancient Pallene) towards the Torone Bay. The same basic layout of a central court surrounded by smaller rooms is repeated, while remains of a reservoir and a kiln that were discovered next to the building belong to the usual working facilities. The discovery of a hoard of 67 bronze coins, mainly issues from local mints from the mid-3rd century AD led the excavator to relate the abandonment of the site to the first Gothic invasion in Macedonia. Despite the setback the site seems to have recovered relatively quickly, and a second building not far from the first was built and remained in use until the late 4th or early 5th century AD. Farmhouses of the period between 2nd–4th centuries AD have been traced and excavated in various coastal areas of the peninsula, in the wetlands near Sani, in Polychrono, in Chanioti, two in the area of Paliouri, and in the area of Kassandreia, all equipped with facilities

for oil and wine production, the size of which does manifest production on a large scale (Tsigarida *et al.* 2009, 380)

Evidence for a rural production activities have been identified at several other sites, such as Potamoi Dramas (Malama and Darakis 2005; Ketanis 2015–2016, 39–41), where a relatively large farm whose occupation spans the 3rd and 4th centuries AD occupied a prominent elevated position of 0.16 ha on the fertile land that stretches to the north of Mt. Phalakron (Fig. 38). Excavations have brought to light a courtyard layout with residential areas to the north and working facilities to the south. The north-east wing hosts the reception, dining and residence halls, along with a *triclinium*, while the south-east wing included different open spaces and rooms which have been interpreted as storage spaces, living spaces for the workers and a dining space equipped with an oven and benches. The investigation of one of these rooms has revealed at least seven large pithoi sunk halfway into the floor, a practice which has been associated with the fermentation and storage of wine, a product in which the area specializes till today. Two small ovoid pottery kilns found in a yard, along with two pits for the preparation of clay testify to the existence of a pottery workshop in this area but it is not clear if they were used for the production of ceramics or tiles, as it is typical at many similar rural sites. Portable finds include everyday ceramic vessels, loom weights, oil lamps, glass vessels and metal artefacts. Seven grain mills have been interpreted as evidence for the function of a unit that was serving needs more than those of the household. The site reflects in many ways the autonomy and the sustainability of the individual rural site of the period and the control that it exercised over a fertile area. The same combination of agricultural and production activities is repeated in many other sites across Macedonia like Pontokomi (Karamitrou-Mentesidi 1999b, 634–637) in western Macedonia (in the site Vrysi), where the examination of a hectare or more of a site with an amazing longevity revealed a number of buildings which might have belonged to a rural site of the late 1st–early 2nd centuries AD with storage facilities and a Late Roman cemetery of 18 pit graves, which produced different grave goods, clay vessels (oinochoai, lagynoi, fish plates), coins, jewellery and an iron mattock. The same can be said about the rural site that has been discovered in Megaplatanos–Monastiraki (Western Upper Macedonia), where rescue excavations in the 1970s brought to light a large building with a variety of small finds (Chrysostomou 1995, 560–561). A burial ground at a small distance with rectangular rock-cut pits graves on an east–west orientation seems to be related to the rural site (Chrysostomou 1995, 561–562).

The evidence from all these sites we have considered points to areas of fertility and a considerable emphasis on agriculture. However, we may suspect that land productivity was not the only factor that helped the emergence of these sites. Equally important will have been the central position in the road system or the proximity to larger or smaller urban centres or even docking facilities. The pattern of distribution across the province shows that most of them were fully integrated into the

transport network, land or maritime. A good example of the latter is the 1st-century BC – 1st-century AD farmstead of ten rooms that was discovered at Orphanio beach, near Amphipolis, which lie close to a number of docking facilities that served the trade between the Strymon River and the Aegean (at least four more rural sites have been located in the area, see Koukouli-Chrysanthaki *et al.* 1996).

Much lower down the social and economic scale were numerous small farms or purely agricultural rural sites which tended to be less specialized in their production. The majority of them show a marked tendency for a rectilinear plan and simple architecture (building techniques) with walls made out of rough stones and a wooden roof. A farmhouse of the early 3rd century AD (the building seems to have been destroyed around the mid-3rd century AD) which was discovered at a site outside the east walls of Thessaloniki (near the prehistoric tell of Toumba) represents a common site type in Macedonia (Sueref and Chavela 1998). The building has the usual courtyard layout with residential and working facilities around a centrally paved court, but the materials used (rough stones without mortar) and the absence of architectural elaboration indicate that this was the residence of relatively small landowner. A similar small-scale agricultural installation of Late Roman times has been detected in the village of Nea Zichne (destroyed in the 6th century AD) in Serres, where the mud-brick foundations of two rectangular buildings have been excavated (Valla 2001–2004). These were part of a larger farmhouse, which was probably located to the west. The southern building, measuring 7.30 × 6.50 m, had two openings on the east and west sides, respectively and under the destruction layer of roof tiles, iron tools and storage and cooking utensils were found. This is indicative that the building could have been used for storage and food preparation. The second building further to the north (9.50 × 6.50 m) probably had the form of a porch opening to the west and featured a thatched roof made of wood and reeds (Ketanis 2015–2016, 35–36). Two further sites may be selected out of many to give substance to the outline already sketched. At the site Melenikitsi (3 km south of Siderokastron in the valley of Strymon) a Late Hellenistic–Early Roman rural building made of wattle and daub indicates probably a common class of rural architecture (Tolia-Christakou 2008, 492). Similar simple buildings have been found in what seems to be a simple agropastoral settlement of the Roman period at the site of "Psili Vrisi", near Edessa (Chrysostomou 2008, 100–101).

Moving though from the level of the large country house to that of a small rural site similar problems of interpretation may arise especially when only working facilities come to light. To what extent these sites represent individual units, the farms of the small holders of Macedonia and not just annexes to large estates or even villages is in many cases impossible to determine. However, a systematic study of the distribution of such small sites may hold significant potential for defining better the density of the rural landscape and its real economic background. Working facilities in the vicinity of large estates or settlements can provide a clearer idea of the extent and scale of agricultural production.

16.1. Epilogue: rural sites in perspective

Despite the gaps in our knowledge, archaeological evidence of villa sites and farms in Roman Macedonia suggest widespread investment in the area's agricultural/productive capacities during the Imperial period. Three points, however, should be noted here. The first is that most of the excavated sites seem to date after the mid-2nd century AD and more accurately to the period between the 3rd and 5th centuries AD, the period of Late Antiquity. If inequalities in land possession were – as it has been proposed – more pronounced during the Imperial period, then the relative absence of Early Imperial large villa sites is a phenomenon that deserves special mention. There is no doubt that control of the agricultural land including the construction of lavish country houses was a primary concern of the main social actors already prior to the Late Roman period. Such motives were clearly behind the construction of large estates as indicated by the case of Angista or Potamoi at Drama. The point, however, here is that these high-status sites became more pronounced after the crisis of the 3rd century AD and during the Early Christian times. Interestingly, these developments are in line with those observed in other parts of the Greek peninsula. M. Zarmakoupi (2013, 761) discussing the evidence of villas from Achaea, has noted the same pattern and attributes it largely to the Diocletianic and Constantinian social and economic reforms that led the elites to seek new forms of self-display outside urban contexts. In effect, they sought to establish their power base in the countryside rather than in the cities and these large, fortified villas such as the one in Oraiokastron in Thessaloniki (Adam-Veleni 2009, 14) were not only productive centres but also statements of power.

The second point is that, despite the variety of layouts and styles (especially in the use of building materials) or sizes, most of these sites show a marked tendency towards an architecture of elegance, where status could be expressed through elaborate and imposing architecture reflecting the standards of living that characterized lavish country residences of individuals with high social standing in Italy and elsewhere (Zarmakoupi 2018). Various amenities which included water features, baths but also ornamental internal or external gardens emphasized this expression of status. Costly investment in water supply prompted the appearance of this sensorial architecture (Rogers 2021) and bathing facilities became a basic component of these country houses (Oulkeroglou 2016, 214–215). Another primary component in almost all units of a certain size is the apsed reception hall with mosaic floors (Dunbabin 1996; Parcharidou-Anagnostou 2011). In terms of the architecture of the villas, the term *triclinium* is often broadly used to describe the main dining room in these complexes but rarely a mention is made to the distinction between the Roman-style *triclinium* and the *oecus* which was broader (Vitr., *De Architectura* 6.3.7–11, 6.4.1–2) and more frequent in the eastern part of the empire. Whereas a strict definition of *triclinium* entails an elongated dining space with three broad couches, a broad definition refers to any room that served as a dining space and usually had couches along three walls (Schnurbusch 2011, 65–81). Nevertheless, both types refer to large rectangular rooms, where three broad couches (fitting two to three people) were arranged along the three

walls of a room placed on the axis of the house, with a large central door opening onto a peristyle. In contrast to the *andron* of the typical Hellenistic house, this was a hierarchically organized space since the place of prominence was always the middle couch, the *summus*, where the seat of honor the *locus consularis* was placed. This spatial organization expressed the Roman hierarchically structured socio-economic mode of patronage, where visitors were ordered according to rank, with the guest of honour and host occupying the privileged centre of the conversation and enjoying the optimal point of view. The position of the room on the central longitudinal axis of the complex but normally away from the central entrance emphasized its importance as a space where only the inner circle could gather.

Architectural remains, however, supply only a fraction of the information required to understand the social relations implied by such sites. Other aspects of the material culture expressing status in these sites, like wall decorations to tableware, which can provide important additional clues to the social value of these country houses must await a synthetic study. What is clear, though, is that the owners of these houses increasingly used dining or reception spaces that projected social hierarchy through their lavish decoration and accoutrements as Ionic and Corinthian capitals, carved and painted stucco, mosaics, and hypocaust-heated baths. The range of architecture is such that it points to considerable variation in wealth.

Yet not all cases reviewed here reveal elite interventions in the rural landscape. Small units and agricultural installations suggest more pragmatic utilization of the land, one practiced by smaller rural communities with emphasis on production facilities. This brings us to the third crucial feature, namely that most excavated sites have produced evidence for processing and storage of agricultural products as well as installations for pottery or even metal manufacture. Archaeological and textual information from other areas of the Roman world suggest a close link between villa sites and production. An obvious question (and inherently linked to the nature of the rural economy) is of course the scale of these operations but unfortunately until now quantitative studies are scant (Grigoropoulos 2013). Conceivably, some of the agricultural products and the products of the crafts were distributed for profit to other communities or to large urban centres, although evidence for this traffic is difficult to identify without quantitative studies. In most of the rural sites that have been identified with kiln facilities there is nothing conclusive to suggest that they were used for something more than household activities. The numerous coarse and storage vessels in rural sites as such can be explained by their use in various daily activities related to agricultural production but the evidence for packaging or processing facilities is minimal (see discussion in Grigoropoulos 2013). However, new discoveries like the large 2nd–4th-century AD compound (covering an area of at least 500 m^2) that was discovered at the site Elaiorema in the outskirts of Thessaloniki indicate the existence of large buildings/complexes fed with water that might have been used for the processing of agricultural products (Valla 2014).

Part III

Urban and rural environments in Roman Macedonia

As in other areas of the Mediterranean world the Imperial period brought a variety of local responses to the economic, political and social changes of the Principate that cannot simply be summarized in a single narrative or in terms of binary opppositions such as “development vs. stagnation” or “novelty vs. tradition”. What is however becoming clear from the rich archaeological evidence is that, despite local and regional variability, the different areas and micro-regions of Macedonia were fully embedded into the sociocultural networks of the Roman world. The coastal and central areas (the core of the old kingdom) retained a close relationship with long-established centres in Asia Minor, Italy and Achaea, while more inland areas had stronger links with Italy through the Balkans (Rizakis and Touratsoglou 2016). Although one would expect that areas in the northern fringes of the province experienced a more irregular integration into these networks, the evidence from centres as far north as Scupi proves the opposite. The unique position of the province between the Italian Peninsula to the west and Minor Asia to the east but also between the Balkan *limes* to the north and the world of the old Greek city states to the south was clearly a dominant factor in the vitality of urban and rural life under the Principate.

The noticeable tranformation in the landscapes of the cities and in the countryside that occurred during the Imperial period (especially after the mid-2nd century AD) signaled a new cultural milieu which, despite the apparent similarities to the Hellenistic background, demonstrates significant cultural, social and political changes that took place under Roman rule. Although the picture of a passive urban and rural landscape still holds sway over a certain academic circle, all the features reviewed in the previous 16 chapters are indicative of the development of a new kind of built

environment. The archaeological evidence shows in many cases continuities between the architecture of the Late Hellenistic and Roman periods but at the same time it is clear that the incorporation into the social and cultural system of the empire had a real impact on architectural types, material adoption and use which eventually produced something more than a simple imitation of Roman architectural and spatial ideas.

Chapter 17

Building methods – construction techniques

Before we proceed, we should briefly turn to building methods and construction techniques as they make the changes of the urban and rural built environment much easier to understand in structural terms. The tradition of Hellenistic architecture remained an established part of the architectural landscape and in this respect, it was a repertoire of ideas and influences. Stone-built techniques and ashlar masonry continued as the preferred building material throughout the period, and they are evident in several buildings such as the "Praetorium" in Thessaloniki, the so called "Sebasteion" in Kalindoia and the houses in Kassandreia and Mieza. Due to lack of bricks and most importantly of good quality mortar, it is not surprising that until the end of the 1st century AD squared stones and ashlar masonry remained the basic construction material for public and domestic architecture. The overall high preference for stone and low preference for brick or *opus caementicium* fit well with the material tradition in Greek cities (Waelkens 1987), and stone remained the dominant construction material in large buildings in Macedonia, while brick building in *opus reticulatum* is generally uncommon. Only rarely western/Roman building techniques appear and even in the Roman colonies the local materials were predominant.

By the mid-2nd century AD, though, bricks and mortared rubble started to be used widely. From the early 2nd century AD onwards, bricks laid in bands alternating with courses of rubble covered with binding material became the most usual building technique. Although often encountered in the archaeological literature as *opus caementicium* this mortared rubble lacked the static advantages and architectural properties of the Roman material which was based on the famous *pozzolana* sand with lumps of stone (*caemanta*). It was the rather unstable nature of this mortared rubble that probably dictated the method of bands of brick (normally three to five) running right through the core of the wall (Fig. 39). This kind of construction was undeniably cheaper than the typically Roman-style *opus caementicium* faced by bricks. The technique – conventionally known as *opus mixtum* – was widely distributed in Macedonia, the Balkans and South Greece and it remained in favour until the Early Christian Period. The use of bricks intensified during the Tetrarchic period probably as a result of the operation of imperially controlled *figlinae* (brick industries) which provided new projects in Thessaloniki with material. During the same period brick

makes its appearance in domestic complexes especially in a series of houses in Thessaloniki, Dion and Stobi. As noted by M. Vitti (1993), the good quality of some of the bricks (traces of sand and straw in the composition of the bricks have been detected in samples from Dion) and the careful laying of the binding mortar in buildings in Dion and Thessaloniki indicates a certain degree of familiarity with brick construction by the late 2nd century AD. The cryptoporticus at the south stoa of Thessaloniki built with stone-built arches and piers and long parts of vaulting made in *opus camemeticium* indicates that the use of the revolutionizing material was not unknown (Kalliga 2001). Nevertheless, exclusively brick construction is very rare; it was used only in structurally weak parts of a building in arches (as is the case with some rooms in the east wing of the agora of Thessaloniki), flat lintels, relief arches, piers, and occasionally in foundations (as is the case with some of the buildings of the Galerian palatial complex in Thessaloniki) distributing the weight load. Characteristic examples of this kind of brick building can be found at the apsidal hall of the Galerian complex (Fig. 39), the central shops in Dion and in the odeion at Thasos.

What should be stressed, though (and something that is not always evident in the archaeological reports), is that the architecture of Roman Macedonia is not the architecture of Rome or Italy but a local adaptation: Roman building types executed with local materials (see for instance the buildings in Argos Orestikon or Nea Terpni) or with local costworthy adaptations of Roman techniques (*opus mixtum*). However, the

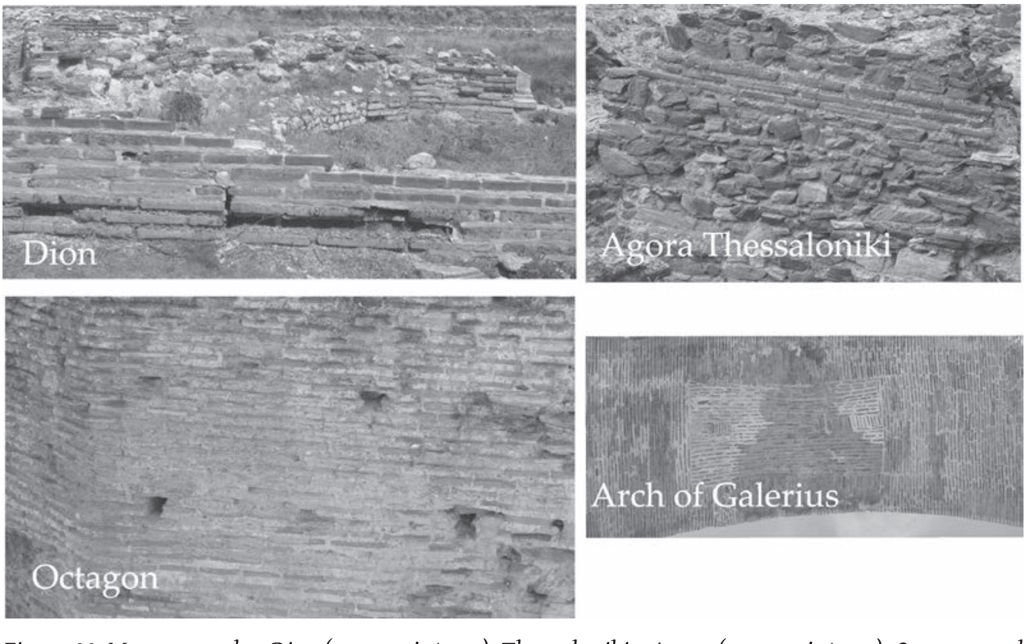

Figure 39. Masonry styles: Dion (opus mixtum)*, Thessaloniki – Agora* (opus mixtum)*, Octagon and "Kamara" (exclusively brick) (photo: author).*

steady improvement (between the mid-2nd century AD and the early 4th century AD) of the quality of bricks and masonry style marked an advantage in local architecture. In Dion and Thessaloniki especially, we can see the increasing use of the new materials in different buildings ranging from houses to baths and the vaulted substructure (the cryptoporticus) of the south part of the agora of Thessaloniki. It is exactly in these buildings and in the new vaulted tombs that the new materials enriched the existing Hellenistic architectural repertoire.

Chapter 18

Urban environments: the course of development

Cities (Papazoglou 1988) continued to be the heart of development and economic growth of many areas within Macedonia, while at the same time served as a ground for elite competition, administration and provision of specialized services. The urbanization process (in the sense of city-building and renewal) was much more intense than in South Greece during his period, stimulating the growth of local economies and leading to the development of new living spaces and monumental environments. As the urban population increased or stabilized after the establishment of the Augustan regime, projects of infrastructure increased and many cities were fundamentally transformed. It is not surprising that almost all excavated urban centres – regardless of their size and importance – have provided evidence of continued investment in their infrastructure, public monuments and private housing.

18.1. First phase: Late Hellenistic to Early Roman

The urban architecture of Roman Macedonia falls into two clearly distinguishable phases. During the first from the Late Hellenistic to the end of the 1st century AD the materials were local and the types mostly Hellenistic in character. The incomplete evidence we have about the Hellenistic phases of many cities is a very serious problem in any attempt to make an exact comparison between cities in the Hellenistic and the Imperial period. In many well-known and excavated sites, such as Philippoi or Dion, what we have is a picture of a fully formed city of the middle of the 2nd century AD (or even later) without the Hellenistic or even the Early Imperial background. This is not to deny that developments took place since it is clear from the epigraphic evidence (Nigdelis 2005) that changes in the form of new buildings or infrastructure had indeed occurred in many cities between the Late Hellenistic and the Middle Roman period. Nevertheless, when it comes to archaeological evidence thus far there is a serious gap in our knowledge and the absence of Late Hellenistic or Early Imperial period remains is striking (for Thessaloniki, see Tsimbidou-Avloniti 2013). The survival of local styles of construction, and in some cases the reuse of building materials, makes it difficult to date monuments securely on architectural grounds. Thessaloniki may have received its first thus far known “political” structure, a “Praetorium” built during the earlier 1st century BC, Kassandreia a public building with lavish decoration and

Kalindoia a "Sebasteion" but the plan in all three cases reflects typically Hellenistic architecture of peristyle or stoic buildings. In plan and detail this seems to be a purely local Hellenistic architecture and the image of the city may have largely remained the same as before the Roman conquest.

At the same time, the presence of extensive and elaborate monumental public spaces and buildings that were relatively new meant that the undertaking of expensive new projects was not always necessary and when they did occur it was more to do with modification and repairs than the radical reshaping of the urban landscape. Modification and adaptation of pre-existing buildings as probably happened in many already crowded cities like Thasos was clearly a more space and cost-efficient solution which did not drain the local resources.

It is usual to interpret these practices as indications of a burdened financial situation or as a sign that the buildings outside the Classical architectural repertoire never really took root on Greek soil. There can be of course other functional interpretations of this "hesitance" to adopt new forms. One (and probably the most important) is that by the mid-1st century AD many of the buildings and construction techniques that are regarded as typically "Roman" had not yet been fully developed in Italy (Ward-Perkins 1981, 97–120). Another is that the leveling of previous building phases (archaeologically verified in Philippoi, Dion and Thessaloniki) that preceded many projects during the Antonine period eliminated earlier traces of architecture that potentially could have shown traces of mixing between old and new forms.

Signs of early transformation such as Roman-style buildings, houses and villas cannot always be easily identified and wherever they appear (as in Mieza or in Philippoi) are quite often perceived and interpreted as the result of the presence of permanently established Italians. Differences between locals and immigrants from Italy/West regarding material preferences have been regarded quite often as important cultural markers (Rizakis and Touratsoglou 2016), since the two groups had different traditions and different experiences with regard to building environments. In practice though, other factors like easy access to local or regional resources and local particularities seem to have had a stronger influence on material preferences in buildings than cultural choices.

Within this environment though we cannot exclude the possibility that occasionally some new ideas may have come directly from Italy and became absorbed into the rural and urban architecture. Undoubtedly, the presence of "local Roman businessmen" and "resident Romans" in the area from the early 2nd century BC may have had more than a merely commercial influence. Few of these features however are closely dated and most of them exhibit the strong influence of the Hellenistic architecture. But there are several such as the theatre in Mieza, the house with the *atrium* in Valavani field in Lefkadia, the Pompeian style bath in Philippoi or the arch – "Golden Gate" – in Thessaloniki which illustrate a stage of development prior to that of the mid-2nd century AD. Although the end of the 1st century AD–beginning of the 2nd century AD seems to be a key moment in Macedonia's adoption of empire-wide

architectural forms, we can assume based on the admittedly scant evidence a much more chronologically dispersed process of architectural acculturation.

18.2. Second phase: from the mid-2nd century AD to the early 4th century AD

By the mid-2nd century AD this Hellenistic tradition started to give its place to a fast-growing empire-wide architecture represented by a wide range of built features. With the area protected from external threats and its cities incorporated into the imperial system, this second phase of urban development focused on the creation of urban landscapes and public spaces for government and leisure that covered local needs but also reflected an increasingly apparent cosmopolitan identity. In almost all cities, we can observe a process of urban embellishment and monumentalization that probably started at the end of the 1st century AD and continued to Late Antiquity. Within this framework, cities such as Thessaloniki, Beroia, Philippoi, Dion, Thasos, Stobi and Heraclea Lyncestis responded positively to empire-wide social and cultural trends, adapting their existing public and private spaces to contemporary architectural and spatial models (Evangelidis 2010; 2014). In most of these cities, building activity continued throughout the 2nd, 3rd and early 4th centuries AD, when they underwent a radical transformation by expanding considerably in size, with new public spaces, habitation quarters and necropoleis being added to the existing ones. Such expansions and reorganizations of urban areas seem to have been more widespread in the cities of the area than previously assumed.

Characteristic is the development that took place in Philippoi, where a radical expansion of the city, following a regular grid system possibly planned since the late 1st century BC, was elaborated in the Middle Roman period. The mid-2nd century AD saw a major construction programme since the creation of the colony, more than a century and half earlier. Around *c.* AD 150–160, prominent local citizens donated and supervised the foundation of a new political space for the colony, a forum with a *curia*, basilica and other public buildings dedicated to the imperial family. Similar projects took place in other large centres as in Beroia and Thessaloniki where the large agora and its surrounding terraces created a monumental ensemble unique for the standards of the Greek peninsula. Compared to the architecture of other cities in Macedonia, the whole project of the agora of Thessaloniki must have appeared truly monumental, in its scale and the use of elaborate architecture.

Generally, the Hadrianic and Antonine periods saw the greatest building activity in the cities of Macedonia, a building fever which was mainly financed by the local councils and local elites. Much effort was invested in the creation or renovation of political spaces and buildings (especially complexes like the agora of Thessaloniki or the forum of Philippoi) but also public amenities (baths) and spectacles buildings (theatres). In many cities the Imperial period saw the expansion of the urban armature, through the construction of new buildings and monuments, many of them

like the façade *Las Incantadas* (Fig. 25) exhibiting elaborate architectural styles. The predominantly simple Doric style architecture of the Macedonian cities gave way to more opulent forms like the Corinthian order (vividly expressed in public buildings in Thessaloniki and Philippoi) and new architectural types like the Building with the Arches in Stobi (Fig. 10). Building activity continued under the Severi, especially in Dion, including the construction of a new public centre. Clearly, by the end of the 2nd century AD a process of urban change was going on in many cities in the area which must have been connected not only with favourable local conditions (the greater activity of local elites) but also with an overall economic prosperity of the area.

The intensification of building activity from the mid-2nd century AD may relate to the gradual upgrade of the area under the Antonines and the Severans that culminated in its promotion as an imperial centre in the early 4th century AD by Galerius. The reason for this may have been the growing strategic role of Macedonia in the Roman campaigns in the East against the Sassanians in Syria and in Mesopotamia. The area supplied not only food and equipment, but also army recruits: according to Dio Cassius (Dio Cass. 77.7–8) the emperor Caracalla had formed a Macedonian-style phalanx from the youths of the area. It is obvious that areas along the renovated Via Egnatia profited most from this new situation and many smaller cities like Berge now gained Roman-style monumental buildings.

18.3. Old and new urban landscapes

Within this general framework of development, we have two distinct classes of landscapes. In the first category (which basically also describes the development in many cities in South Greece) the urban landscape was characterized by the preservation of the inherited layout and the pre-existing public spaces, with all the connotations that these bore, and the selective adoption of certain types of contemporary monuments and buildings. These were adjusted within the existing grid and physical space of the city, while many pre-existing buildings remained functional following modifications. This is clearly evident in Thasos, where the agora with its stoas belonged to the basic stock of Classical and Hellenistic town planning, while others like the arch, the colonnaded street or the specialized food market were distinctively Imperial period phenomena. We should not forget that, by the Imperial period, cities like Thasos, Abdera or Maroneia were almost 500-year-old foundations and the impression they conveyed was one of continuity, extending to their decoration, layout and topography. As it has been recognized for Achaea (Alcock 2002), maintaining long-standing architectural traditions, while participating in wider cultural trends was probably a marker of civic identity in many cities with a long history but whether the preservation of existing buildings and public spaces derives predominantly from the community's wish to maintain continuity with older urban forms (and not out of practicality) is difficult to answer. Nonetheless, underlying this continuity were important changes in layout and planning, above all changes in the concept of the city as a service provider and

as a monumental landscape (Thomas 2007). Although in most urban programmes the formulation of the urban layout was regulated by existing topographical parameters there was still ample ground for improvization and creation of new spaces. The excavations of the agora of Thasos, for instance, have made it clear that the old square had been considerably enlarged through additions behind the stoas. We can assume that similar interventions in the central public spaces of the old cities were characteristic of the Early Imperial period (Evangelidis 2014).

In the second class we have the radical creation of a new landscape, characterized by strong axiality, Roman-style buildings and conformity to strict layouts. The most powerful impression left by the remains of Philippoi and Dion is how remarkably deep the impact of the architectural *koine* and spatial ideas was by the end of the 2nd century AD. In both cities the legacy of Hellenistic architecture can only be seen mostly in the town plan laid out on a Hippodameian grid with a network of streets intersecting at right angles. For the large cities of the province like Thessaloniki and Beroia, the development of the topography and architecture may have been influenced by these cities' role as transregional administrative, ritual and commercial centres. It is unfortunate that so little has survived from Beroia of the Imperial period (Brocas-Deflassieux 1999), the seat of the provincial Koinon, because here one would have seen monuments, which set the patterns for the architecture of the province. Of all the great buildings that once adorned the city, we have to be content with the scattered remains of baths and public or domestic buildings. Their most obvious common characteristic is the ample use of marble and elaborate decoration; they all speak of a rich urban monumental architecture of great typological variety. Many other cities such as Stobi, Heraclea Lyncestis or Styberra were creations of a recent date without any substantial pre-Roman tradition of monumental architecture. These new foundations, more fully integrated into empire-wide currents are the cities with the greatest body of evidence for "Romanization" of the built environment in the Imperial period. Even in the most marginal areas of the old kingdom in cities such as the city of Isar/Mavrinci or Argos Orestikon, the use of lavish material like colored marble, the introduction of new building types and spatial layouts became the main features of the landscape. Many of these buildings, whether they present architectural ingenuity or not, are buildings that fully reflect the contemporary architectural language. Within this context different trends can be noticed.

One of them clearly visible in the late 1st century BC–1st century AD is expenditure on the construction of temples related to the newly established imperial cult or to the cult of "Rome and Augustus". Evidence (archaeological and epigraphical) from different sites like Thasos, Kalindoia, Thessaloniki and Philippoi during the Julio-Claudian period point to a variety of buildings and monuments associated with the imperial cult and the veneration of the emperor (Evangelidis 2008). Located in or close to the main public space of the city pronounced the presence of the emperor in urban areas with the most intense civic activity. During the 2nd century AD this expenditure was directed towards places of entertainment and leisure (baths, theatres) which now

seem to become a priority within the urban landscape; an indispensable part of the *commoda* ("advantages") of the city and an attractive choice for visitors and locals. The period saw a dramatic increase in the number of baths (Oulkeroglou 2016) which can arguably be seen as the most characteristic form of public building in the urban fabric. Indeed, we might argue that just as in the Early Imperial period cities sought to achieve local munificence by building temples, the several examples known from the early 2nd century AD of the construction or improvement of baths or theatres (Di Napoli 2018) may reflect a new interest in the concept of the city as a provider of services. This was a costly business because baths needed expenditure, constant maintenance, as well as large quantities of water, fuel and staff, while organization of large-scale games required significant amounts of money and complex logistics that involved different groups of people from gladiators to providers of wild animals.

Although the period is marked by a general taste towards buildings devoted specifically to leisure and spectacle, in Macedonia we have the unique pattern of construction of new public spaces, buildings suitable for the public functions of the government and administration (Evangelidis 2014). This, seen especially in the new power centres such as Thessaloniki or the colonies points to the significance of these types of structures as indications of the city's political and social prestige. Most of these large projects like the new agora of Thessaloniki or the renovation of the agora of Thasos were completed and funded in stages. Only rarely, as was the case with Philippoi, the sponsorship by a high ranking official (a senator) and other elites allowed the planning and execution of a single building programme. In this process of formation of political–civic landscapes it is interesting that no new gymnasia were built, although many as the one in Amphipolis and Beroia continued possibly to function until Late Antiquity. The lack of interest in investment in gymnasia as centres for the military and athletic training of the citizens may reflect a shift towards other categories of buildings that did not have the connotations that the gymnasium had.

Other urban trends were also evident such as the creation of architectural frames/vistas which enhanced the theatrical sense of the urban landscape. In Philippoi and Thessaloniki for example visitors of the civic centre were faced with an axial view resulting from the succession of terraces. Arches (Thasos, Philippoi), gates (Maroneia), columnar façades (Thessaloniki) and colonnaded streets (Beroia, Edessa) guided traffic and enhanced this monumental effect (Evangelidis 2020a). The monumentalization of the streets with the addition of stoas and elaborate architecture of passage as seen in Thessaloniki, Beroia and Thasos but also with more simple means like the use of expensive stone for pavement was a clear trend of the period but also a very efficient way to alter the form of public areas with a long history.

For a more comprehensive view of the developments in the urban landscape one has to turn to the colonies and the other large cities of the province. A growing body of evidence allows us to view the landscapes in increasingly sharp perspective. The idea of an ordered environment can be seen especially in the area of the civic centre which was defined by high profile religious and administrative buildings. In Philippoi

the forum and in Dion the Great Bath complex had exactly this notion of enclosed monumentality, since, in essence, they were detached from the rest of the city. The same logic is apparent in other public spaces such as the agora of Thessaloniki (Adam-Veleni 2001), even the agora of Thasos which transformed from a relatively open space to a dense space, surrounded and architecturally framed (Dickenson 2017, 189–194). At the same time other urban areas were similarly upgraded, most notably the great avenues which were now paved and framed by colonnades or areas around spectacle buildings. In Thessaloniki (and to a lesser extent in Beroia) there is evidence of alternative monumental centres with baths and public buildings clustered around roads or open spaces. Many other areas of social activity like commercial districts or urban sanctuaries (see for instance the Serapeion in Thessaloniki and the temple of Isis in Stobi) arose. What their specific connection with groups, associations or *collegia* was, is unknown but it is clear that guilds and religious associations started to have increasing importance in the life of the cities. The number of monumentally developed spaces increased and to these we should probably also include extensive burial grounds and deathscapes. The variety of burial locations sheds light on the changing use of urban space and on transformations of ownership and social prominence during the Imperial period (Rizakis and Touratsoglou 2000). Among the higher levels of society, we can observe how social status might be displayed through the use of monumental graves at prominent locations close to roads or at sites with high visibility and accessibility. Investment in elite burials through the construction of elaborate funerary monuments and the emphasis on decorative funerary architecture remained mostly in the exclusive prerogative of the cosmopolitan urban centres. It is mostly there that private wealth, status and legitimization of power can be seen to reflect the structured society of the Imperial period with emphasis being placed on the representation of the deceased and their family. However, the large number of burials discovered close to suburban plots implies that lesser economic and politically privileged urban groups were also buried there. Not surprisingly, the apparent diversity displayed by the urban burial grounds conform to the individual nature of the burial process that emphasize the sense of social hierarchy. The diversity evident in one type of tomb or another and the erection of different monuments over the graves indicate the existence of deathscapes which experienced deep transformations, especially in terms of visibility, display and the overall size they occupied in suburban areas.

Many sites (Thessaloniki, Dion, Philippoi, Beroia and Stobi) illustrate well the relative amount of space given to public and private buildings, and their distribution, and their size (Zarmakoupi 2018). This has encouraged a theorization of a civic space segmented into highly organized public (*e.g.* forum–sanctuaries) and private units (like "Villa Dionysos" in Dion). Urban public space at many scales (forum, commercial markets, streets, sanctuaries) served as a locale for social interaction and a stage for community activities. On the other hand, the changing form of elite residences and the relatively large space they occupied in the urban grid speak about the role and

meaning of these complexes in the wider urban landscapes of the Imperial period. Together public spaces, baths, theatres, cemeteries and houses contributed to an urbanism based on cohesion and visibility and thus had a major impact on the appearance of the city. The increasing importance that these features had in the urban fabric quite often involved a major reorganisation of the urban layout.

18.4. A new urbanism: the case of the colonies

For the latter, the cases of Dion and Philippoi are very important and give us an almost complete picture of what a Roman city in the province of Macedonia looked like in the period between the middle of the 2nd century AD and the Early Christian years. Both cities are typical examples of the architecture and spatial organization of the period and appear in many manuals and archaeological guides as typical examples of the urban development of the period. The fact that both sites were not inhabited after their abandonment in Late Antiquity allowed their systematic exploration and excavation for almost a hundred years without the obstacles that appear in places with continuous habitation, contributing thus to a better understanding of their layout and spatial organization.

It is a fact, however, that despite their outward "typicality" both sites are in essence non-typical examples for the study of the built environment. First of all, both cities, along with other lesser-known sites such as Kassandreia or Pella, were Roman colonies, which means that their urban development was based on standards and principles that testified to this quality. A second very important element, is that in both places the Late Hellenistic–Early Imperial period phases cannot be identified with certainty or are not archaeologically visible. Thus, we ignore not only the form of the Hellenistic city, which was succeeded by the colonies but we also largely ignore the works that took place during the first stages of the colonial foundation. The impact of the establishment of the first Italian colonists – namely, the construction of Italian-style buildings – in the city's existing public areas and structures remains unclear and it is highly likely that several pre-existing public buildings underwent modifications in these early stages of development. However, with no solid archaeological evidence the extent they used the existing infrastructure or the extent that brought new architectural ideas remains unknown.

18.5. The formation of a new environment: the city in the Imperial period

With all that said, we can return to the original question: what characterizes the new urban enivronment of the Imperial period? The ever-growing body of evidence has convincingly shown that the urban landscape of the cities of Roman Macedonia does not stand outside the currents of architectural developments in the rest of the Roman world. Although the archaeological evidence presented in the previous pages varies

greatly in terms of quality, the overriding impression is that different cities across Roman Macedonia adapted to the growing tendency from the late 1st century AD to treat the urban environment as a whole through the construction (or renovation) of different styles of buildings, monuments and public spaces.

Within this context, the city-building tradition required the formation of new architectural morphologies like the construction of new public spaces, elaborate armatures and infrastructural projects which secured architectural unity and enhanced the monumental aspect of the landscape by broadening the range of uses provided by it. Where can we identify these changing concepts of space? First of all, they are evident from the fact that the new features (buildings, monuments, spaces and cemeteries) occupied a much more standardized location in the urban fabric than in the previous periods. This inevitably led to a certain degree of uniformity with each city equipped with an armature of public and private buildings and infrastructure. Clearly, spatial associations between roads, passages and public spaces were more pronounced in the large cities but examples such as the colonnaded street in Edessa or Thasos suggest that even medium-sized cities tried to accentuate the link between the different sectors of the city. This was neither an easy nor simple task. The superimposition of these architectural features (with all the difficulties that such projects entailed) on the pre-existing (quite often haphazard) grid of centres with a long history like Beroia or even in the much smaller cities of central Macedonia reflects in the most eloquent way the process of transition towards a new urban entity, the city of the Imperial period.

Despite the fragmented presentation, the architectural remains tell us a lot about the choices that formed the urban landscapes of the cities of Macedonia. And clearly one of the basic principles of architecture is diversity, a mix of types and decorative styles which sprang out from the same architectural language. Some adhered to easily recognizable Classical or Hellenistic archetypes, like the peristyle type of the commercial agora in Stratoni or the Doric order of the north-east stoa at Thasos, some (especially after the end of the 1st century AD) were western Roman, like the arch in Thasos or the basilica in Nea Terpni and the numerous baths across the province and some had a more “eclectic” character like the façade Las Incantadas in Thessaloniki or the Building with the Arches in Stobi.

This further supports the argument that new features and new spatial layouts were not necessarily applied in order to promote a Roman character – *Romanitas* – but they were rather related to a new concept of life strongly linked with particular features. Available resources, traditions of craftmanship but also aesthetic and cultural preferences as is for instance the preference for Roman-type monuments in the colonies or the influence of Asia Minor in elaborate façades, mouldings and motifs might have played an equal role in the choice of style or type.

At the same time and despite the certain variation in architectural details certain basic principles are apparent: visibility, display, elaboration, monumentalization and maximization of provision of services. It is exactly in these principles that the different

architectural choices of the cities seem to coincide. This was a built environment which, although shaped in the Hellenistic tradition, was influenced heavily by spatial ideas and architecture brought in from the West as well as from the Hellenistic East, especially Asia Minor.

A key feature of this convergence is the increasing emphasis on monumentality which lay not only in the scale and size of the buildings, but also in lavish decoration. This was the result of the increase in the amount of resources spent in public and domestic architecture. Building materials now included exploitation and import of marble (coloured, as seen in many buildings in Beroia, Stobi, Thessaloniki, or white) that started around the end of the 1st century AD and increased in the 2nd and 3rd centuries AD (Stefanidou-Tiveriou 2009a). Although as we have seen the materials used in buildings were a result of the availability and suitability of resources, as well as various cultural norms and traditions for external and internal surfaces, the visual and tactile properties of marble were important. A great part of the monumental effect was ultimately connected with the greater exploitation of marble (especially the coloured varieties) for columns, pavements and veneers. Marble was not of course alien to local tradition (although not as broadly used as in South Greece) but during the 2nd century AD it met with wide distribution even in the most remote areas. Expensive imported marble from Thasos in areas where stone and wood had been traditional materials for hundreds of years, had a strong social meaning to most people, particularly to elite people who promoted a certain image. The increase in expenditure clearly appears in decoration as well, which especially at that time became an integral part of architecture; it is not strange that almost all the large houses, baths and occasionally large public buildings like the stoas at the agora of Thessaloniki received decoration in terms of veneered walls and mosaic floors (Fig. 40).

Overall, it can be said that the different buildings and monuments encountered in the cities of Roman Macedonia must be viewed as the products of the broad diffusion of spatial and architectural ideas, the application of which was favoured by the nature of the Roman world itself. As with other aspects of the material culture of the period this is the common framework within which the evidence from Roman Macedonia must be understood and discussed. However, this was neither a standardized process nor one widely or uniformly utilized. Different terms of funding, different sources of influence and different levels of accessibility to local or external resources (*e.g.* good quality stones) determined the individual character of each project and its pace of completion. The appointment from the mid-2nd century of *curatores rei publicae*, officers whose responsibility was to oversee the financial affairs of the cities, is an indication that the process was not without problems and imperial intervention was quite often needed.

The urban landscapes of Macedonia were the product of a world that allowed the circulation of ideas within an administrative and cultural framework that secured development and peace. As noted by E. Thomas (2007, 161) in this context, monumental urban architecture encouraged a belief that the stability and unity of the Empire

Figure 40. Decoration: mosaic floor from Dion (photo: author).

had been enhanced by the "immesurable Majesty of the Roman peace" (Pliny, *Natural History* xxvii.3). Over the course of the Imperial period even the smaller cities of the area were now integrally involved in networks and received influences which stretched across the Roman world and were fueled by the *pax romana* and an extensive network of roads and sea routes that secured high mobility/connectivity (Versluys 2014, 17). A certain set of conditions that peaked during the Imperial period like intra-city rivalries or euergetism (often motivated by the personal advancement of ambitious individuals who wanted to establish themselves in the hierarchy of power) seem to have even further accelerated processes like the construction of monumental urban landscapes. The archaeological evidence has been claimed to support this reading. In this context of course there is always the temptation (especially in overviews of this kind) to focus on the grandiose and the exceptional, as reflected usually in urban contexts, at the expense of the rural.

Chapter 19

Rural environments. Villas and beyond

As it has been repeated many times throughout the text, one of the most important recent developments in our understanding of the archaeology of Macedonia in the Imperial period has been the greater knowledge of rural sites and landscapes. The archaeology of rural space appears as a vibrant field of research with new excavations, new techniques (especially field surveys and GIS) and foremost new classes of material. The map of rural sites of the Imperial period has only grown denser, especially with increased archaeological investigation in the course of the great public works. In addition to the large villas that had long been the feature of archaeological interest, a number of smaller farms and rural agglomerations, cemeteries and small sanctuaries have emerged. Advances in excavation techniques and the analysis of the finds allowed the better understanding of patterns of settlement in the countryside, and an increasing awareness of the diversity of those patterns. A diversity which was influenced by the different (and quite often contrasting) local geographical and climatic landscapes of Macedonia.

Research of the countryside has undeniably come a long way since the 20th century when the focus was mostly on the architecture of the individual villa sites yet in some regards it remains attached within a certain interpretative framework which focuses mostly on the "economic" aspects of the rural landscape. As elsewhere in the Roman world the result of the annexation is manifested in the influx of wealth into the countryside, seen most emphatically in the construction of large rural villas which functioned as the power centres of large families. In almost every study dealing with rural Macedonia (if not Roman Greece *in toto*) the prevailing pattern of rural life can be seen to be one of isolated rural sites of high status which reflect a "Roman" style in the management of the countryside (Adam-Veleni 2009; Rizakis 2013). The same assumptions lie behind the reading of each high-status rural site as the residence (or more accurately the rural base) of wealthy urban elites, reflecting an economy that lay mostly in the hands of few. Indeed, textual evidence indicates that investment in rural facilities may have been a constant pattern among elite estate owners through which they could strengthen not only their finances but also their public image. It has already been mentioned how changes after the annexation have been seen as an early stage in the development of a predominantly villa-type economy.

Archaeological traces of high-status occupation seem to go hand in hand with this theorization and the investigation of a large number of villa-type sites has generally be seen to confirm the outlines of these ideas. We can assume from the position of some of the high-status sites like in Stephanina near Lake Volvi or in Baltaneto in Naousa where a veranda opened towards the fields that many were architecturally staged to display varied views of the surrounding countryside and of the agropastoral works taking place in the estate.

Sites like the farms in Potamoi Dramas or in Palaiomanna in Beroia are believed to owe their existence in the intensification of agricultural production, a process which was favoured by *pax romana*, good weather conditions (McCormick *et al.* 2012) and "improvement" of technical and infrastructural capacities. Evidence of artisanal activities, crafts and pottery production facilities at many sites across Macedonia confirms this picture. Within this landscape it has been argued that large sites such as the villa in Angista represent intensively used estates and that smaller sites such as the farm at Toumba on the outskirts of Thessaloniki, the site in Aphytis or the cluster of farms in Lete represent lower class farmhouses. It is also common to place these small sites in the context of a relatively densely populated agropastoral countryside which was deeply dependent on the large landowners. The concentration of the larger sites along overland routes like Via Egnatia and other major roads has also been seen to indicate that these estates played a significant role in the processing, and distribution of the region's agricultural produce. The continued economic significance of many rural sites in Central Macedonia (especially in Emathia, Bisaltia but also in the more upland areas of western Macedonia) as late as the Byzantine period, points to the importance of good soil and the availability of natural resources (especially water) in the economic potential of the site. Finally, another common theme is that in many areas by the end of the 1st century AD, communities had begun to cluster around rural villas that catered to the needs (and probably provided work) of the surrounding population.

These conventional representations of a rational and economic viable rural landscape summarize the most widely accepted theory among historians and archaeologists that sees the rural landscape of Roman Macedonia as systematically and intensively exploited through a dense network of large and medium-sized estates. Central to any discussion of the formation of rural landscape in Roman Macedonia are the often oversimplified and much debated notions of change in land patterns, conventionally expressed under the mantle of "Roman influence" or Romanization.

19.1. Beyond the villa economy model

It is nevertheless true that the appearance and wide distribution of villa-type sites are incapable of a satisfactory explanation without invoking the change in land ownership. Understanding the ownership system of land can be fundamental in order to explain the features of the development of rural geography. If for instance the model

of ownership of large estates by powerful elites is correct, this can imply the existence of a certain form of homogeneity across the countryside as well as the existence of rural populations controlled to a greater or lesser extent by tenurial conditions.

Like all conceptual models however the "villa economy model" may not exactly give the full picture of how rural landscapes were exploited or inhabited. Although the earliest phases of these developments (especially during the Late Hellenistic period) have been primarily seen in terms of radical land and wealth redistribution, more moderate views also deserve attention. The discussion (Chapter 2.2) for instance about the existence of large estates prior to the Roman conquest highlighted some possible reservations about this kind of reading. One is that the incorporation into the Roman Empire may have accentuated and accelerated processes of space differentiations and land possession already in existence before the Imperial period. So, what appears to be new and radically different in many rural areas of the Greek world (the accumulation of land property in the hands of few), may have been already a long-standing economic reality in Macedonia. The growth of large estates could have been a familiar scenario, especially in the fertile alluvial lands of Central Macedonia, where a large part of the military elite of the old kingdom had their estates. Therefore, there must have always been a tendency for the more powerful landowners to absorb nearby smallholdings or even small settlements into their own estates.

A second reservation concerns the very nature of the archaeological evidence. Because measuring or assessing the total amount of land under cultivation or the topography of the countryside only through the material remains of the *pars urbana* of villas or the remains of farms can be problematic. Primarily the fact that many rural excavations are to do largely with villa-type sites where the research interest concentrated more on the lavish features of the domestic part (*pars urbana*) than the storage facilities or other facilities that could have provided more solid information about the production capacity of these sites (Grigoropoulos 2013). The obvious result of this approach is that single rural sites are often interpreted as reflecting a landscape dotted by such independent farms or villas which is plausible but definitely not the only reading of these features. The archaeological evidence is complex and cannot support the existence of only one pattern of land tenure across the region. Although much more work needs to be done in surveying and excavating rural sites in order to fully evaluate the rural topography during the Imperial period, the preliminary results of such work (Ketanis 2015–2016) highlight the diversity of rural settlement patterns across the province, doubting thus the traditional picture of a deserted countryside.

In the current state of knowledge, it is, however, difficult to know which sort of site is more typical, smaller farmhouses or the larger high-status villas. Other types of rural settlements like villages have proved more elusive, although systematic work has started to put together a picture of nucleated and dispersed settlements surrounded by villas and other farmhouses, rural installations/facilities, monuments and burial grounds. Investigations since the 1980s at the site of Aspri Poli (Kefalidou 1995, 576–578) and Polymylos (Karamitrou-Mentesidi 1999a) in western Macedonia,

have revealed nuclei of habitations which include settlements, farms and artisanal or agricultural facilities which continued to be occupied into the Imperial period. Textual evidence (Hatzopoulos 1996, 117) suggests that villages maintained some importance as areas of habitation into the Imperial period, demonstrating the greatest continuity of occupation. Non-elite rural sites are less archaeologically visible but continuous rescue work has brought to light evidence in the form of small rural installations like Psili Vrisi and burial grounds like Mikro Dasos that suggest a densely populated rural environment. Many more sites may have been temporary or seasonal in nature, inhabited perhaps by pastoralists, lumberjacks or rural laborers attracted by the plentiful supplies of the countryside. Seasonal labor through which the rural poor could have sought temporary employment, leaves little archaeological traces but we can assume that it was a regular feature of rural life.

19.2. Rural continuity

Overall, the countryside of Roman Macedonia represents a complex and highly varied agricultural landscape which supported both arable and pastoral farming and a settlement pattern that included many isolated villas, farms, small hamlets as well as villages. Soil conditions, climate, tradition and, most significantly, access to wider markets through the road network played their role in the vitality of this landscape. The question that almost inevitably arises in this context is how different was the rural landscape of Roman Macedonia in comparison to previous periods?

Research has begun to break down strict periodization and increasingly suggests a greater continuity of rural landscape than our written sources or the study of individual sites have led us to believe. The increase in archaeological data has started somehow to change the traditional narrative with emphasis being placed on continuities with the Hellenistic period and with the downplaying of the role of Late Hellenistic crisis in permanently shaping the Macedonian rural landscape. The continued excavation of Roman-period villas has revealed, despite failure to record the early phases for many of them, a strong pattern of continuous habitation in their broader exploitation zone dotted by a series of smaller properties that take advantage of the productive opportunities of their environments. On the other hand, a growing number of more humble rural sites such as Melenikitsi, Mikro Dasos or Gomati in line with other types of evidence like rural burial grounds, show a greater degree of continuity with the past, indicating that next to the villas and farms more mundane forms of rural living were also an indispensable part of the rural landscapes. Within this environment many individual settlements in regions such as Aegean Thrace or Upper Macedonia show signs of continuous occupation, or only slight dislocation, between the 1st and the 4th centuries AD. The study of such sites in eastern Macedonia and Aegean Thrace has suggested the existence of landscapes/territories dotted by dispersed settlements of Thracian stock some of which are known to have been tribal centres which lasted into Late Antiquity. This suggests a more continuous development of a rural life and

economy than originally thought. The continuity of settlement between the Early and Late Imperial period in many regions has been connected not only to the continuing vitality of the local rural economies, but also to the environmental parameters that dictated occupation in these areas in the first place.

19.3. Rural space outside the economic sphere

Traditional approaches to the rural landscape of the Imperial period have been characterized by a tendency to regard it purely on economic terms, as an agricultural resource with emphasis on the economic realities of the villa system (Bowman and Wilson 2009). Within this framework non-economic factors (such as ritual or symbolic space for instance) are rarely considered. On the other hand, it is difficult to ignore that rural landscapes are not only expressions of economic relations and power, but also socially constructed environments in which settlements, sanctuaries (Alcock 1993b) and burial monuments can be seen as expressions of cultural distinctiveness, cultural continuity and memory, all integral parts of individual and collective identity. Within this environment, elements of the rural landscape can become identity reference points or cultural markers (Ray 1998). In the case of rural Macedonia, in addition to the farms and villages that had long been the focus of archaeological investigation, these markers include ritual sites (like the open-air sanctuaries for the Hero Equitans or the sanctuaries of Zeus Hypsistos), features of the landscape like the burial tumuli (see the cemetery at the site Gomati) and even habitation sites or settlement patterns like the dispersed native settlements that dotted the foot of the Rodope mountains.

Clusters of houses, extensive burial grounds and tumuli, areas of metallurgic activities and great concentrations of pottery that have been investigated in the lowlands of the Rodope range, in Upper Strymon and Middle Haliakmon valleys or even in the highlands of Chalkidike indicate the existence of dispersed native settlements with an amazing longevity which in some cases extended to the Byzantine period. Cases like these suggest that the unique physical environment which required a specific agropastoral way of life (and a specific cultural milieu) continued to shape the form of rural landscape throughout the Imperial period (Tsiafakis and Evangelidis 2021). Most importantly these were landscapes with distinctive characteristics identifying them from a cultural perspective. Open air sanctuaries, tumuli and settlements suggest the existence of persisting practices, beliefs and identities and help us to greatly appreciate the strength of the native traditions that more often than not underlay the Roman metropolitan or classical veneer. What I argue here is that these features, which are generally interpreted in terms of the communal identity of local communities, represent a typical aspect of the rural landscape in many areas of Macedonia.

Therefore, instead of a "rational" Romanized landscape characterized by villas and organized agricultural activities (an idea that seems to predominate in the archaeological literature concerning rural environments), someone travelling across

Macedonia would also encounter landscapes dotted by features rooted in "traditional" perceptions about space and occupation of land that evolved over hundreds of years. Recent publications on rural space (Horster 2010) have also stressed the continued importance of assembly not just at architecturally articulated shrines or sanctuaries, but also at other open-air sites or cemeteries that had long been traditionally significant features of the landscape. Rural shrines like the sanctuary of Ennodia in Kozani (Exochi) or large cremation cemeteries like the cemetery at the site Gomati in Chalkidike could have functioned as "central places" for regional communities, which gathered at them to engage in rites of social reproduction in addition to the cultic or burial rituals themselves.

Traditional concepts of "Romanization" espoused a view that in contrast to urban and wealthy rural populations, lower-status rural communities were conservative and maintained their traditional ways of life. However, the "conservatism" of some rural groups, such as the Thracians, must not be seen only as passive inheritance of earlier traditions but rather as a way that local traditions interacted with the empire-wide social, economic and cultural trends. The different features like the open-air sanctuaries, the burial grounds, the forts and the pastoral enceintes, the monuments of the past such as the large Macedonian tombs, compose the diversity of the rural space, building its unique character. Viewing the rural landscape outside the economic sphere, a wider set of spatial relationships becomes apparent, suggesting long-term links between people and the rural landscapes that are often hindered by a strict economic approach. The coexistence of local ritual and burial traditions alongside more typical Graeco-Roman forms means that the landscape of rural Macedonia should not be conceived exclusively in "Roman" terms.

Chapter 20

Macedonia in a wider perspective: contrasts and comparisons

If one thing becomes clear from the archeology of Macedonia, it is the realization that we are dealing with many different areas that presented different degrees of urban and rural development, different traditions of urban life, different customs and cultural practices which makes any generalization difficult. Against this backdrop any attempt to draw simple parallels between urban and rural landscapes from Roman Macedonia and other eastern provinces is risky. Still, two related questions demand our attention. Does the evidence from Macedonia speak about a different process of development than that of other areas of the Aegean world, especially Achaea? If so, were these developments applied earlier than in southern Greece? Was the earlier annexation of Macedonia the cause of a different course of urban and rural development?

Archaeological orthodoxy generally envisages little architectural difference across the divide between North and South Greece. Yet even if we accept the validity of such similarities, there are also real divergences between these two regions. As a "transitional" zone Macedonia was exhibiting an admixture of architectural characteristics from very early on. After 100 years of systematic exploration we now know that the pre-Roman architecture of the area demonstrates a variety of attributes that are unique – palatial complexes, large rural mansions, large peristyle agoras and monumental tombs. We see this very clearly in the royal centres and other large cities such as Amphipolis or Beroia. However, in comparison with the South Greek cities, and in some respects even with the coastal cities in the North Aegean, the pre-Roman urban landscapes of Macedonia remain largely unknown in archaeological terms. Aside from the frequent lack of tangible archaeological evidence (at least outside the great royal centres), the greatest divergences between Macedonia and South Greece lay in their rather distinct sets of traditions of urban life. Clearly, for many small cities and towns in Macedonia – especially the ones away from the coast like Vardarski rid (Gortynia?), Eidomene, Styberra or Petres – the experience of urban living and the form of the built environment was different than the one in Achaea.

Therefore, in many respects, Macedonia was quite different from Achaea and these divergent trends persisted in the Imperial period. At a broader level, we can observe

that there are two basic aspects in which the north and south differed: the extent of building/rebuilding that was undertaken during the period between the 2nd and 4th centuries AD and the closer conformity (in Macedonia) to empire-wide architectural trends and types. One important reason for this was probably that in many cities there does not seem to have existed any very widely diffused monumental urban architecture before the Imperial period. There were of course individual monuments and buildings but nothing like the rich Classical architectural landscapes of Achaea. Thus, it was relatively easier for many of the underdeveloped cities of Macedonia to adopt forms of empire-wide architecture than the densely built cities of Achaea.

Although there was no single or standard way that cities responded – in architectural terms at least – to the incorporation into the Empire, we can generally say that the impact of "Roman" (empire-wide–contemporary) architecture upon the landscapes of Macedonia was far more immediate (or visible) than it had been on that of the typical Greek cities of Achaea. The advantageous position on the renovated Via Egnatia, and other major Balkan roads brought significant benefits and probably an upsurge of economic activity during the 2nd, 3rd and early 4th centuries AD which appear to be a time of intensified building and civic activity.

This is not implying that the influence or the process of acculturation was necessarily weak in the cities of South Greece. On the contrary, new materials, building methods and concepts found their way to the cities of Achaea (Vitti 2016) as well as in Macedonia. Macedonia, however, had a lower degree of urbanization and for many settlements exposure to forms of classical architecture started late in the Hellenistic period. Many cities, especially those created in areas such as Upper Macedonia, Pelagonia and Paeonia where settlement had traditionally been organized around villages, acquired their urban framework only in the Late Hellenistic or the Early Imperial period. The remoteness of these settlements from the great creative centres of urban architecture in the Aegean world, and the fact that many cities (among them Thessaloniki) were relatively new foundations, meant that there was ample ground for radical spatial reorganisation and architectural experimentation. Thus, new forms and ideas were more easily introduced and adapted. Another significant reason[4] probably was that monumental architecture in pre-Roman Macedonia was basically directly connected to the royal court: it was the kings who were the main commissioners of building projects and had access to resources, architects and space to develop new projects. With the Roman conquest, the royal court ceased to exist and the new up and coming elites of various ethnic background of Imperial times became the new developers, seeing in the Roman architectural language a greater space for experimentation and a means to promote their power agendas.

The result is that – in comparison with the landscapes of Achaea – the urban environment of the cities in Macedonia is characterized by much more conformity to imperial norms than local idiosyncrasy. It is to such factors that we must look

[4] I wish to thank D. Grigoropoulos for formulating the specific idea.

for the explanation of the process formation in the urban environment of many Macedonian cities during the Imperial period. On the other hand, any assumptions that architectural ideas and building types were introduced earlier than other areas of the Greek peninsula are in most cases supported by fragmented evidence. Even if some new devices (like *opus reticulatum* or mosaic floors) and building types like the Roman *domus* or even the basilica had been adopted locally (for instance in areas where Latin speakers were settled) the scarcity of information available on Early Roman architecture before the mid-2nd century AD makes it difficult to assert that the development of the built environment in Macedonia was earlier than that of other parts of the Greek world. Until some new evidence comes to light the issue remains open to discussion.

Contrast and comparisons, mostly arguments for similarity of the Imperial period architecture, can generally be made with the eastern provinces assumed to be typified by Hadrianic Athens or Antonine Asia Minor. However, Roman Macedonia (and probably the same counts for every other region of the empire) does not have to be either similar to everywhere else or characteristically distinct. A certain degree of architectural similarity existed which derived from the necessities of urban and rural life and widespread distribution of ideas and technical know-how. Within this framework changes and adaptations were not so different from ones taking place elsewhere. At the same time however, it is important to look at the local archaeological contexts where variety, difference and divergent forms of life and architecture characterize local responses to imperial incorporation.

Epilogue

Agoras and fora, public and commercial buildings, classical temples and open-air sanctuaries, theatres and odeia, baths and fountains, houses and villas, rural sites and fortifications, cremation and inhumation cemeteries, mines, quarries and roads provided the physical framework of human activity during the Imperial period. The development of these features, the emergence/introduction of new architectural types and spatial layouts, the adaptation of old and the continuity or disuse of others grew out of the special conditions of the empire and carried with them the needs and the aspirations of the society that created them.

As I have contended earlier, the better understanding of this built environment requires primarily a synthetic look of the rich existing archaeological evidence. This has been the basic structuring principle that this book was designed to illustrate, and the evidence presented throughout the different chapters is meant to provide a starting point for those who want to delve deeper into more specialized subjects. New finds and future evidence will refine the interpretations presented here and provide new insights into the archaeology of this large part of the Graeco-Roman world.

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